



REPORT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS

OF THE

CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS FOR

WOMEN'S ISSUES

IN THE 109TH CONGRESS

Submitted by
Hilda L. Solis, Co-Chair
and
Ginny Brown-Waite, Co-Chair

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues (CCWI) during the 109th Congress, we are proud of our accomplishments over the past four years, as both Co-Vice Chairs and Co-Chairs. We have been privileged to work with a dynamic and diverse group of women Members of Congress who are dedicated to increasing women's rights and improving the health and well-being of women and children in the United States and around the world.

We have been honored to serve with the invaluable and hard-working Co-Vice Chairs of the Caucus, Reps. Lois Capps and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. We are excited for Rep. Capps to become the Democratic Co-Chair of the Caucus in the 110th Congress, and incredibly proud to report that Rep. Ros-Lehtinen will serve as the first woman Ranking Member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. We know that they will both excel in these roles, and we look forward to continuing to work with them on issues important to women. We are excited that Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers has taken on the role of Republican Co-Chair, and know that she and Rep. Capps will provide excellent leadership for the Caucus in the 110th Congress. We are happy to report that Rep. Jan Schakowsky and Rep. Mary Fallin, a new Member of Congress, will become the new Co-Vice Chairs. We hope that all the women Members will join us in congratulating the new leadership of the Women's Caucus and actively support them in the Caucus' activities in the new Congress.

We also wish to thank the task force co-chairs for the Women's Caucus, who helped host briefings and promote legislation and Member events in the 109th Congress: Reps. Shelley Moore Capito and Tammy Baldwin, Co-Chairs of the Women's Health Task Force; Reps. Judy Biggert and Eddie Bernice Johnson, Co-Chairs of the Women in Business Task Force, Reps. Heather Wilson and Susan Davis, Co-Chairs of the Women in the Military Task Force, and Reps. Deborah Pryce and Betty McCollum, Co-Chairs of the International Women's Task Force. By joining together as one strong, unified voice for women, we can make even more of a difference and help promote issues that affect women's lives.

A number of bills were passed and events occurred in our country and around the world during the 109th Congress that had an acute impact on women. This report outlines the initiatives that the Women's Caucus has taken on in the past two years. In January 2006, the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was signed into law. This law creates several new programs to assist women who are victims of violence and provides increased funding levels. Many women Members were integral to the passage of VAWA and drafted various provisions of the law. The Women's Caucus sent several letters related to the bill, urging floor consideration and full funding for VAWA programs once the law was enacted. The foundation of a woman's health is her safety, and with each reauthorization of VAWA, more women are accessing the help and services they need to live a life free from violence.

The Women's Caucus continued to focus on women's health issues in the 109th Congress. From heart health to cervical cancer to microbicide development, women Members have been incredibly active to promote better health and screening for women. The Caucus helped promote an important piece of legislation, the reauthorization of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. We appreciate the hard work of the Women's Health Task Force Co-

Chairs, Reps. Tammy Baldwin and Shelley Moore Capito, who helped promote a number of important briefings, and along with Reps. Sue Myrick and Anna Eshoo, helped champion the reauthorization of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (H.R. 5472). While the Senate was unable to consider H.R. 5472 before the end of the 109th Congress, we will continue to strongly advocate for the bill and hope that the 110th Congress will act quickly to reauthorize this important screening program for low-income women.

The Women's Caucus was also proud to support trailblazers for women with H.Res. 357, a resolution authored by Congresswoman Brown-Waite, to honor Justice Sandra Day O'Connor on the occasion of her retirement from the Supreme Court. As the first female Supreme Court justice, she broke down barriers for women in the legal profession. We were proud to honor her service and her role in the history of women's achievements. H.Res. 357 passed the House unanimously in March 2006.

Political change in Iraq and Afghanistan has provided significant opportunities for increased rights for women in that country. Women Members of Congress were privileged to meet with women legislators and leaders from Iraq in a roundtable discussion in July 2005, and followed up that meeting with a letter to the leaders of Iraq's Transnational Assembly urging that rights for women be protected and increased in the new constitution. The Women's Caucus was also excited to participate in a program on International Women's Day 2006 when women leaders from Iraq and Afghanistan shadowed several women Members for the day.

The Women's Caucus has continued to advocate for women who are victims of violence in Latin America. We voiced concerns in both the 108th and 109th Congresses about the brutal murders of over 400 women in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico over the past 13 years. The Caucus was instrumental in promoting H.Con.Res. 90, a resolution authored by Congresswoman Hilda Solis to bring attention to the murders of women in Ciudad Juarez. The House and the Senate passed H.Con.Res. 90 in May 2006, and our work continues to help bring attention to violence against women, both in the United States and abroad.

The prospects for increasing women's rights around the world are constantly evolving, and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues will continue to be a strong voice for women around the world in the 110th Congress. Once again, we would like to thank all of our women colleagues in Congress who have worked with us in the 109th Congress to make a difference and improve the lives of women everywhere. We are incredibly proud of the achievements of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. Thank you for supporting us as your Co-Chairs, and we look forward to supporting Congresswomen Lois Capps, Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Jan Schakowsky, and Mary Fallin as they continue to advocate for women in the 110th Congress.

Sincerely,

HILDA L. SOLIS
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus
for Women's Issues

GINNY BROWN-WAITE
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus
for Women's Issues

WOMEN'S CAUCUS LEADERSHIP IN THE 109TH CONGRESS

Co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues:

Hilda L. Solis (D-CA) and Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL)

Vice-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues:

Lois Capps (D-CA) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)

Task Force Chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues:

International Women: Reps. Betty McCollum (D-MN) and Deborah Pryce (R-OH)

Violence Against Women: Reps. Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL) and Hilda L. Solis (D-CA)

Women's Health: Reps. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)

Women in Business: Reps. Judy Biggert (R-IL) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Women in the Military: Reps. Susan Davis (D-CA) and Heather Wilson (R-NM)

WOMEN MEMBERS OF THE 109TH CONGRESS

(71 total; 46 Democrats, 25 Republicans; 16% of the U.S. House of Representatives)

Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)
Melissa Bean (D-IL)
Shelley Berkley (D-NV)
Judy Biggert (R-IL)
Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)
Mary Bono (R-CA)
Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU)
Corrine Brown (D-FL)
Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)
Julia Carson (D-IN)
Donna Christensen (D-VI)
Barbara Cubin (R-WY)
Jo Ann Davis (R-VA)
Susan Davis (D-CA)
Diana DeGette (D-CO)
Rosa L. DeLauro (D-CT)
Thelma Drake (R-VA)
Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO)
Anna Eshoo (D-CA)
Virginia Foxx (R-NC)
Kay Granger (R-TX)
Jane Harman (D-CA)
Katherine Harris (R-FL)
Melissa Hart (R-PA)
Stephanie Herseth (D-SD)
Darlene Hooley (D-OR)

Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX)
Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)
Nancy L. Johnson (R-CT)
Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH)
Marcy Kaptur (D-OH)
Sue W. Kelly (R-NY)
Carolyn Kilpatrick (D-MI)
Barbara Lee (D-CA)
Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)
Nita M. Lowey (D-NY)
Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY)
Betty McCollum (D-MN)
Cynthia McKinney (D-GA)
Cathy McMorris (R-WA)
Carolyn Maloney (D-NY)
Doris Matsui (D-CA)*
Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-CA)
Candice Miller (R-MI)
Gwen Moore (D-WI)
Marilyn Musgrave (R-CO)
Sue Myrick (R-NC)
Grace Napolitano (D-CA)
Anne Northup (R-KY)
Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)
Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)
Deborah Pryce (R-OH)

Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA)

Linda Sanchez (D-CA)

Loretta Sanchez (D-CA)

Janice Schakowsky (D-IL)

Jean Schmidt (R-OH)*

Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL)

Allyson Schwartz (D-PA)

Shelley Sekula-Gibbs (R-TX)*

Louise McIntosh Slaughter (D-NY)

Ellen O. Tauscher (D-CA)

Nydia M. Velazquez (D-NY)

Maxine Waters (D-CA)

Diane Watson (D-CA)

Heather Wilson (R-NM)

Lynn C. Woolsey (D-CA)

- Denotes special election winner during 109th Congress.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S ISSUES

The Women's Caucus, including the International Women's Task Force co-chairs, Reps. Betty McCollum and Deborah Pryce, have consistently worked together to increase rights for women around the world. With the evolving political situation in Iraq, and the drafting of that country's new constitution in 2006, women Members worked together to make a difference for Iraqi women. Women Members met with Iraqi women leaders in July 2005 for a roundtable discussion and sent a letter to leaders of Iraq's Transnational Assembly urging that rights for women be protected and increased in the new constitution. Women Members participated in a program coordinated by the State Department on International Women's Day 2006 when women leaders from Iraq and Afghanistan shadowed several Members for the day.

The Women's Caucus leadership in the 109th Congress weighed in on violence against women in Mexico, where murders of women have not been prosecuted or even investigated for years. The Co-Chairs and Co-Vice Chairs cosigned Dear Colleagues to promote H.Con.Res. 90, a resolution authored by Congresswoman Hilda Solis to express condolences and propose a set of actions to end the brutal murders of women in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Over 400 women have been murdered in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico over the past 13 years, and very few suspects have been arrested. The House and Representatives and the Senate passed H.Con.Res. 90 in May 2006; our work continues to end violence against women throughout the world.

As the Co-Chairs of the Women's Caucus, we were proud to help host a number of briefings on issues important to women around the world. Topics ranged from the aftermath of Asian tsunami in early 2005, to women's representation in politics, to combating human trafficking, and promoting women's rights in Pakistan, Iran, and Africa. Through these briefings and outreach, we have helped educate staff, Members and the public about the need for stronger protections for women under the law throughout the world.

Briefings on International Women's Issues

March 2, 2005: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) briefing entitled "Women in Politics: 2005." IPU presented their most recent World Map that highlights the participation of women worldwide in legislation and executive positions in government.

April 12, 2005: JHPIEGO (Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics) briefing entitled "After the Tsunami: Meeting the Health Care needs of Women and Children in South Asia," which featured experts who have spent significant time in the region since the disaster.

April 13, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled the "International Trafficking of Women and Girls," with Ambassador John Miller, Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the State Department, who discussed the federal government's anti-trafficking efforts.

May 24, 2005: Women for Women International Afternoon Tea, which provided an opportunity to learn about the disproportionate impact war has on women and to meet the inspirational women who direct Women for Women International's programs in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Rwanda. Rep. Lois Capps, Women's Caucus Co-Vice Chair, spoke about her personal experience sponsoring women in Nigeria through Women for Women International.

October 18, 2005: Lifetime Television, Amnesty International USA & The Tahirih Justice Center in conjunction with the Congressional Human Rights Caucus and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues briefing entitled "Women and Girls as Global Commodities: An Examination of Human Trafficking and the International Marriage Broker Industry." The briefing included a screening of excerpts from the Lifetime original miniseries "Human Trafficking."

November 1, 2005: The Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Congressional Human Rights Caucus briefing entitled "Pakistan: Violence Against Women" featuring Mukhtaran Bibi, who was gang-raped on the orders of a village council in Pakistan as punishment for the alleged misconduct of her brother.

March 8, 2006: The Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Iran Working Group, in conjunction with the Alliance of Iranian Women, International Women's Day briefing on the rights of women and children in Iran and their work to advance democracy.

March 30, 2006: NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby briefing entitled "Global Journey of Peace: Iraqi Women Speak."

July 18, 2006: Alliance for Microbicide Development, Global Campaign for Microbicides, International Partnership for Microbicides, and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Microbicide Research, A Promising Prevention Strategy For HIV/AIDS: Can It Save Women's Lives?"

Letters on International Women's Issues

August 4, 2005: Letter to the Transnational Assembly of Iraq in support of the protection of women's rights in the Iraqi Constitution. This letter was a joint effort by the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Iraqi Women's Caucus. There were 35 signers total.

- Signers (34): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Ros-Lehtinen, Tauscher, Granger, Lee, E.B. Johnson, Moore, Biggert, Davis (Susan), Sanchez (Loretta), McCollum, Baldwin, Tubbs Jones, Schakowsky, Hart, Harman, Jackson-Lee, Slaughter, Brown, Kaptur, Maloney, Lowey, Matsui, Woolsey, Berkley, Herseth, Myrick, Pryce, Lofgren, McCarthy, Watson, Wasserman-Schultz.

December 22, 2005: Dear Colleague on Violence Against Women in Africa cosigned by Co-Chairs of the Women's Caucus. This Dear Colleague was distributed to all Members of Congress and included a new briefing paper by the Joint United Nations Programme on

HIV/AIDS about the disturbing connection between violence against women and HIV infection. Women in some African nations who are victims of violence are up to three times as likely to be infected with HIV.

Member Events about International Women's Issues

March 9, 2005: Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and Iraqi Women's Caucus Meeting with Iraqi and Afghan women leaders in honor of International Women's Day.

June 8, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing for women Members with Ambassador John Miller, Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the State Department, who discussed the 2005 Trafficking in Persons report. This briefing was supported by the Women's Caucus Co-Chairs, Reps. Solis and Brown-Waite; Co-Vice chairs, Reps. Capps and Ros-Lehtinen; International Women's Task Force Co-Chairs, Reps. McCollum and Pryce; and Reps. Maloney, Granger, Lowey, Harris, Millender-McDonald and Drake.

June 22, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. and Peace X Peace roundtable discussion with Members of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Iraqi Women's Caucus. The meeting featured Dr. Naba Saleem Hamid, founder of New Horizons for Women and a Professor at Baghdad University. This event was supported by the Women's Caucus Co-Chairs, Reps. Solis and Brown-Waite; Co-Vice chairs, Reps. Capps and Ros-Lehtinen; International Women's Task Force co-chairs, Reps. McCollum and Pryce; and Iraqi Women's Caucus Co-Chairs, Reps. Granger, Tauscher and Tom Osborne.

July 19, 2005: International Museum of Women lunch for women Members. The International Museum of Women is the first museum honoring the history, contributions and achievements of women worldwide. At the briefing, the International Museum of Women previewed their exhibit, "Imagining Ourselves," a powerful, positive voice with and for a new generation of women -- nearly one billion women worldwide -- in their twenties and thirties.

July 21, 2005: Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues roundtable discussion with Iraqi Minister of State for Women's Affairs, Azhar Sheikly, and Members of the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly about the drafting of the Iraq Constitution.

March 8, 2006: Iraqi and Afghani women legislators shadowed women Members of Congress, with the help and coordination of the State Department, in honor of International Women's Day. The women Members gained understanding and newfound appreciation for the challenges faced by women legislators in those countries.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ISSUES

One of the most important legislative accomplishments for women in the 109th Congress was the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Since the founding of the Women's Caucus, women Members have worked diligently to end violence against women. Even though increased focus on this issue, police training, stronger laws, and services for victims of violence have helped stem the problem, nearly one in every four women experiences at least one physical assault by a partner during adulthood. Yet, only one in every seven (14 percent) domestic assaults comes to the attention of police. Four out of ten victims of domestic violence live in households with young children, who most likely witness the abuse. The foundation for a woman's health and well-being is her safety. In the 109th Congress, women Members continued to work on behalf of women and children, and their efforts helped make VAWA 2005 the strongest bill yet to combat violence against women.

Combating violence against women is a high priority for both Co-Chairs of the Women's Caucus, who also served as Co-Chairs of the Violence Against Women Task Force of the Women's Caucus in the 109th Congress. Rep. Solis and Rep. Brown-Waite authored provisions that were included in the final version of VAWA. In their capacity, the Women's Caucus Co-Chairs, Reps. Solis and Brown-Waite coordinated a letter from women Members to the House Leadership asking that VAWA be considered before the end of 2005. The Co-Chairs also helped promote a number of briefings, including the annual "Stop Violence Against Women Week" that is coordinated by Lifetime Television and a number of nationally-recognized groups that work to end violence against women.

Once VAWA passed the House, ensuring full funding for programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act was a high priority for the Caucus. Multiple letters were coordinated to urge appropriators to fully fund VAWA. The Caucus also helped coordinate a letter to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General asking that VAWA programs receive full funding in the fiscal year 2008 budget recommendations sent to the President. The economic and emotional toll that violence against women takes on our country is still a serious problem. When programs aiming to end violence against women receive robust funding, we can make a real difference for women and children who are victims of violence. We look forward to continuing to work with the Caucus to help safeguard women and children and end violence against women once and for all.

Briefings on Violence Against Women

March 7 – 11, 2005: 4th annual Lifetime TV "Stop Violence Against Women Week" in Washington, DC.

April 27, 2005: National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Center for Victims of Crime, Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault, and Lifetime Television, in conjunction with the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Congressional Victim's Rights Caucus, briefing entitled "VAWA: How It's Meeting the Needs of Sexual Assault Victims

May 11, 2005: Girls Inc. briefing entitled “Girls Speak Out About Violence in their Lives.” This briefing served to draw attention to the impact of violence against women, especially domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of gender-based violence, so that staff could learn more about how these types of violence affects young girls.

April 4, 2006: Lifetime Television, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV) advance screening of the documentary “Searching for Angela Shelton.”

April 3 – 7, 2006: Lifetime Television’s 5th annual “Stop Violence Against Women Week in Washington” (April 3 - 7) brought together the nation’s leading experts, advocates, and policy-makers for a series of special events in Washington, DC to send the message that violence against women affects us all and takes us all to stop it.

Letters on Violence Against Women

December 15, 2005: Letter to House and Senate Leadership asking for floor consideration of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) before adjournment of the first session of the 109th Congress (before the end of 2005).

- Signers (39): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Ros-Lehtinen, Pelosi, Capito, Slaughter, Biggert, Maloney, Hart, Tauscher, Wasserman-Schultz, McCarthy, E.B. Johnson, Baldwin, Matsui, Kilpatrick, Roybal-Allard, Moore, Norton, Christensen, Kaptur, Herseth, Carson, Tubbs Jones, Sanchez (Linda), Lowey, Millender-McDonald, Sanchez (Loretta), Velazquez, Napolitano, Schakowsky, Schwartz, Davis (Susan), McCollum, Berkley, Woolsey, Watson, Bean.

May 2, 2006: Letter to House Appropriations Committee Chair and Ranking Member urging rejection of budget provision to rescind funding for the Crime Victims Fund, as authorized by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). This letter was a joint effort by the Women’s Caucus and the Victim’s Rights Caucus and 111 Members signed on in total.

- Signers (23): Brown-Waite, Solis, Harris, Capps, Maloney, Baldwin, Schakowsky, McCarthy, DeGette, Berkley, Jackson-Lee, Kelly, Matsui, Hart, Wasserman-Schultz, Tauscher, Johnson (Nancy), Herseth, Carson, Lee, Moore, DeLauro, Cubin.

May 5, 2006: Letter to House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Chairs and Ranking Members of jurisdiction in support of full funding for programs reauthorized or newly created by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the FY2007 appropriations bills.

- Signers (9): Solis and Brown-Waite (co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues); Poe, Costa, Harris (co-chairs of the Victim’s Rights Caucus), Napolitano (CHC Chair), Watt (CBC Chair), Honda (CAPAC Chair), Lofgren (Member of House Committee on the Judiciary).

July 14, 2006: Letter to Attorney General Gonzales and Health and Human Services Secretary Leavitt in support of full funding for programs reauthorized or newly created by the Violence

Against Women Act (VAWA) in the FY2008 budget. This letter was a joint effort by the Women's Caucus and the Victim's Rights Caucus and 167 Members signed on in total.

- Signers (50): Solis, Brown-Waite, Harris, Lofgren, Wasserman-Schultz, Watson, Pryce, McKinney, Herseth, Bono, Schwartz, Bordallo, Berkley, Bean, Tubbs Jones, Baldwin, Hart, Schakowsky, McCollum, Tauscher, Cubin, Davis (Susan), Biggert, Moore, Capito, Christensen, Johnson (E.B.), DeGette, Carson, Napolitano, Kilpatrick, Capps, Lee, Norton, Ros-Lehtinen, DeLauro, Woolsey, Matsui, Lowey, Roybal-Allard, Maloney, Waters, Pelosi, Harman, Johnson (Nancy), Jackson Lee, Emerson, Brown, Millender-McDonald, Slaughter.

WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES

Protecting and promoting women's health and well-being has been one of the broadest issue areas in which the Women's Caucus has had an impact, both throughout its history and in the 109th Congress. Reps. Tammy Baldwin and Shelley Moore Capito were very active in their roles as Co-Chairs of the Women's Health Task Force. A number of women Members introduced their own legislation dealing with a variety of women's health topics, including heart health, breast cancer, eating disorders, underage drinking, and more. We were happy to encourage other women Members to cosponsor a number of these bills or sign on to letters about these issues.

The Co-Chairs of the Caucus also helped promote a number of briefings, letters and bills about women's health, the most significant of which was H.R. 5472, the reauthorization of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP). H.R. 5472 was introduced by Rep. Myrick and our Women's Health Task Force Co-Chair, Rep. Baldwin. Both are Members of the committee of jurisdiction, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Reps. Myrick and Baldwin helped promote the bill by cosigning Dear Colleagues encouraging members to cosponsor the bill. For the past 15 years, the NBCCEDP has helped low-income, uninsured, and underserved women gain access to potentially lifesaving screening for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer as well as education, outreach, case management and treatment services. Women Members of Congress were instrumental in the establishment of the program in 1991, and subsequent reauthorizations. We were proud to continue that legacy in the 109th Congress.

The Co-Chairs of the Caucus were proud to support a number of women's health briefings in the 109th Congress. Many of these briefings had a common thread of understanding the importance of gender differences in medical treatment for women and health research. From heart health to all types of research, we highlighted how differences between men and women in relation to health conditions, such as heart disease, are not understood well enough by health care and research professionals. We investigated a range of other health topics, including HIV/AIDS, cervical cancer, smoking among women, health disparities, hormone replacement therapy, and the importance of healthy living. We also investigated the financial side of health care with briefings on health benefits literacy and long term health care insurance and its impact on women.

We worked hard to provide a forum for a diverse range of women's health topics in Congress. We know that the Women's Caucus will continue the legacy of women Members before us by advocating on behalf of women's health. We hope that our efforts to educate our colleagues, their staff and the public will help to improve the overall health of women throughout the country and the world.

Briefings on Women's Health

May 10, 2005: American Legacy Foundation, National Journal and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Circle of Friends: Uniting to be Smoke-Free™," a national movement of women who want to support friends and loved ones who are trying to quit smoking. This

briefing took place during National Women's Health Week. Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death for America's women.

July 14, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Cultural Competency: A Critical Component to Address Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities for Women."

October 20, 2005: Aetna, the Financial Planning Association and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Women's Health: Health Benefits Literacy and Retirement Planning."

December 6, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "The Status of Cervical Cancer Vaccine Research."

December 7, 2005: The Jacob's Institute for Women's Health briefing entitled "No Wonder We're All Confused: Hormone Therapy and the Communication of Medical Information."

January 10, 2006: amfAR (The Foundation for AIDS Research), the Society for Women's Health Research, and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "HIV/AIDS: The Disproportionate Impact on Women of Color in the U.S."

January 26, 2006: Girl Scouts of the USA and Women's Policy Inc. briefing entitled "A New Girl Scout Research Institute Report: The New Normal? What Girls Say About Healthy Living."

February 14, 2006: WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women and Heart Disease and the Society for Women's Health Research briefing entitled "The 10 Q Report: Advancing Women's Heart Health Through Improved Research, Diagnosis and Treatment."

April 27, 2006: The Century Council's briefing entitled "Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking," which highlighted a new resource to help discourage underage drinking among our nation's teenage girls. Members of the U.S. Women's Soccer Team, including Olympic medalist Julie Foudy and Phyllis Greenberger, President and CEO of the Society for Women's Health Research were on hand to highlight the importance of this initiative.

May 10, 2006: American Legacy Foundation and Women's Policy Inc. briefing entitled "Her Journey: Smoking's Presence Throughout Women's Lives."

May 15, 2006: Society for Women's Health Research briefing entitled "Bone Up on Calcium & Vitamin D Facts: Knowledge is Strength."

May 22, 2006: The Friends of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), in cooperation with Reps. Capito and Baldwin, Co-Chairs of the Women's Health Task Force, briefing entitled "Spotlight on NICHD: Consequences, Treatment, and Prevention of Obesity."

July 18, 2006: Genworth Financial, Inc. Long Term Care briefing entitled "The Impact of Long Term Care on Women: An Analysis of Women as Care Providers and Care Recipients."

July 18, 2006: Alliance for Microbicide Development, Global Campaign for Microbicides, International Partnership for Microbicides, and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled “Microbicide Research, A Promising Prevention Strategy For HIV/AIDS: Can It Save Women’s Lives?” Senator Barack Obama spoke at the briefing.

September 26, 2006: Society for Women’s Health Research briefing entitled “From the Lab to the Clinic: Translating Women’s Health Research into Practice.”

Letters on Women’s Health

May 2, 2006: Letter to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding pregnancy outcomes and birth defects related to prescription drugs.

- Signers (11): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Baldwin, Tubbs Jones, Hart, Capito, Lofgren, Maloney, Brown.

September 27, 2006: Letter to House Republican Leadership asking for floor consideration of the reauthorization of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program before the end of the 109th Congress.

- Signers (35): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Pelosi, Baldwin, Myrick, DeLauro, Capito, Lowey, Davis (Jo Ann), Jackson-Lee, Harris, Schakowsky, Woolsey, Maloney, McCollum, Kaptur, Velazquez, Millender-McDonald, Lofgren, Sanchez (Linda), Berkeley, McCarthy, Norton, Wasserman-Schultz, Matsui, Bean, Moore (Gwen), Davis (Susan), Christensen, Tubbs Jones, Napolitano, Kilpatrick, Eshoo, Biggert.

Member Events on Women’s Health

May 18, 2005: Women’s Health Member Meeting with the Department of Health and Human Services Coordinating Committee on Women’s Health: In recognition of Women’s Health Month, the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues held a Members-only meeting to provide an agency perspective of the pressing needs in women’s health research, education, and advocacy. Dr. Wanda Jones, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Women’s Health) made brief opening remarks on behalf of the Committee.

WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

The Women's Caucus continues to focus on the issues faced by women in the military, and the Co-Chairs of the Women in the Military Task Force, Reps. Susan Davis and Heather Wilson, were effective in their roles in the 109th Congress. The Caucus maintained its support for an initiative started by Rep. Louise Slaughter, the Women's Caucus Co-Chair in the 108th Congress, to shine a light on sexual assault in the military. Thanks to her tireless efforts, the Pentagon has now established a Task Force on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies. We were pleased that the Caucus continued to work with Rep. Slaughter to provide a safer atmosphere for servicewomen in our military.

The Caucus was proud to honor women veterans with the annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. Organized by the Women's Caucus Co-Vice Chairs, Reps. Lois Capps and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, this event gives women Members an opportunity to recognize the contributions of servicewomen from each branch of the military, and also pay tribute to those women veterans who have served with courage and valor. With the ongoing military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, we look forward to working with the Caucus to highlight servicewomen's outstanding service to our country.

Briefings on Women in the Military

October 19, 2005: Department of Defense Briefing on Task Force on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies. In response to numerous allegations of sexual harassment and assault among cadets at the academies, the Task Force was formed in September 2004 and charged with reviewing the extent of this problem and developing recommendations for reform at the service academies. This briefing served as an update on the task force's work. The Dear Colleague for this briefing was circulated by Reps. Slaughter, Solis, Brown-Waite, Capito, Susan Davis, and Loretta Sanchez.

November 9, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc., the Women's Research and Education Institute, and Disabled American Veterans briefing entitled "Trailblazers: Women Veterans Share Their Stories."

November 15, 2006: Women's Policy, Inc., the Women's Research and Education Institute, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, and BPW/USA's Women Joining Forces Initiative briefing entitled "Trailblazers: Women Veterans Share Their Stories."

Member Events about Women in the Military

May 26, 2005 and May 23, 2006: Annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony for Women Veterans. This annual event at the Arlington National Cemetery honored our nation's servicewomen and women veterans for their courage and achievements, and remembered women who have died while on duty serving the United States. We honored outstanding senior female non-commissioned officers (NCOs) from the Air Force, the Army, the Coast Guard, the Marines, and the Navy.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS, EDUCATION AND THE WORKPLACE

Women are an integral part of our nation's economy and workforce, and the Women's Caucus worked to highlight the issues faced by women in educational settings and the workplace. Too many women struggle to make ends meet and support their families. While many women have joined the workforce in the past few decades, disparities remain in certain professional fields. Expertise in science, math and technology are the foundation of increasing America's competitive edge in the technological fields which will increasingly dominate the global economy. Yet, women and minorities are seriously underrepresented in these fields. The Women's Caucus worked to highlight the importance of bringing more women into these fields with briefings in the 109th Congress.

The Women's Caucus weighed in on a proposal by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to discontinue the "Women Worker Series" which provides solid data about women's participation in the workforce. Even with more women than ever earning their college degree and joining the workforce, we still need data to see where the needs are to diversify and expand women's participation in more professional fields.

Finally, the Women's Caucus urged the Department of Education to rescind a "policy clarification" issued in 2005 that dramatically changed the accountability of colleges and universities to the requirements laid down by Title IX. Title IX was passed in 1972 to provide women an equal footing with men in college sports. Athletics can provide young women with many of the tools they need to succeed in life, while also inspiring legions of young girls to get active. We will continue to advocate for Title IX and for women in sports who inspire us all.

Women have unique skills and expertise to bring to a host of professions and continue to help drive our economy. The number of women-owned businesses continues to grow at twice the rate of all U.S. firms. In order to spur economic growth, we must continue to encourage and support the women entrepreneurs in our country. We look forward to working in the 110th Congress to promote policies that support women in academics, athletics, business and the workplace.

Briefings on Women in Business, Education and the Workplace

February 17, 2005: Women Work! And The National Network for Women's Employment briefing on their report entitled "Chutes and Ladders: The Search for Solid Ground for Women in the Workforce." This report is an update on the status of single mothers and displaced homemakers in the United States, with recommendations for employers and policymakers for improving women's economic status.

March 21, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing on H.R. 366, Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act, specifically for staff of women Members. Speakers included staffers for Republican and Democratic Members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

May 25, 2005: Women’s Policy, Inc., the American Association of University Women, the American Chemical Society, Girls Incorporated, and the Women’s High-Tech Coalition, in conjunction with the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues, and the Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) Education Caucus (Reps. Vern Ehlers and Mark Udall), briefing entitled “Advancing Women in Science.” The briefing examined the challenges facing women scientists and efforts underway to advance women in science in both the private and public sectors.

October 26, 2005: Women’s Policy, Inc. briefing entitled “Asset Building: The Path to Financial Independence for Women.”

April 26, 2006: Washington Area Women’s Foundation and Women’s Policy Inc. briefing entitled “Stepping Stones: Increasing Economic Security for Low-Income Women.”

December 6, 2006: Women’s Policy, Inc. briefing entitled “Expanding the Middle Class: Paths to Economic Self-Sufficiency for Women and their Families.”

Letters on Women in Business, Education and the Workplace

November 4, 2005: Letter to House Appropriations Committee Chair and Ranking Member supporting the Bureau of Labor Statistics “Women Worker” data series.

- Signers (31): DeLauro, Solis, Brown-Waite, Baldwin, Bean, Berkley, Biggert, Capito, Capps, Carson, Davis, Eshoo, Herseth, Johnson (E.B.), Lee, Matsui, Maloney, McCarthy, McCollum, Millender-McDonald, Moore, Napolitano, Norton, Sanchez (Linda), Schakowsky, Schwartz, Slaughter, Tauscher, Wasserman-Schultz, Watson, Woolsey.

November 14, 2005: Letter to House and Senate Appropriations Committee Chairs and Ranking Members supporting Senate language regarding the Title IX policy clarification issued by the Department of Education in March 2005.

- Signers (30): Solis, Brown-Waite, Woolsey, Capps, Johnson (Nancy), Slaughter, Capito, McCarthy, Wasserman-Schultz, Tauscher, Maloney, Tubbs Jones, McCollum, Baldwin, Sanchez (Linda), Millender-McDonald, Napolitano, Waters, Berkley, Christensen, Harman, DeGette, Jackson-Lee, Moore, Schakowsky, Davis (Susan), Lofgren, Johnson (E.B.).
 - Reps. George Miller, Christopher Shays, Rob Simmons also signed the letter.

Member Events about Women in Business, Education and the Workforce

February 16, 2005: Women’s High-Tech Coalition, in partnership with Women In Bio hosted a reception honoring the newly-elected women Members of Congress.

April 28, 2005 and April 27, 2006: Take Our Daughters to Work Day (TODS) with Women’s Policy Inc., Girls Inc., and Girl Scouts of the USA paired girls with women Members of Congress to shadow them and their staff for a half day of learning and sharing experiences. This

day was established by the Ms. Foundation for Women to create an opportunity for girls and boys to think about their expectations for the future while seeing the opportunities before them firsthand.

109TH CONGRESS BRIEFINGS AND EVENTS (CHRONOLOGICAL)

February 17, 2005: Women Work! And The National Network for Women's Employment briefing on their report entitled "Chutes and Ladders: The Search for Solid Ground for Women in the Workforce." This report is an update on the status of single mothers and displaced homemakers in the United States, with recommendations for employers and policymakers for improving women's economic status.

March 2, 2005: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) briefing entitled "Women in Politics: 2005." IPU presented their most recent World Map that highlights the participation of women worldwide in legislation and executive positions in government.

March 7 – 11, 2005: 4th annual Lifetime TV "Stop Violence Against Women Week" in Washington, DC.

March 21, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing on H.R. 366, Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act, specifically for staff of women Members. Speakers included staffers for Republican and Democratic Members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

April 12, 2005: JHPIEGO (Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics) briefing entitled "After the Tsunami: Meeting the Health Care needs of Women and Children in South Asia," which featured experts who have spent significant time in the region since the disaster.

April 13, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled the "International Trafficking of Women and Girls," with Ambassador John Miller, Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the State Department, who discussed the federal government's anti-trafficking efforts.

April 27, 2005: National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Center for Victims of Crime, Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault, and Lifetime Television, in conjunction with the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Congressional Victim's Rights Caucus, briefing entitled "VAWA: How It's Meeting the Needs of Sexual Assault Victims

May 10, 2005: American Legacy Foundation, National Journal and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Circle of Friends: Uniting to be Smoke-Free™," a national movement of women who want to support friends and loved ones who are trying to quit smoking. This briefing took place during National Women's Health Week. Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death for America's women.

May 11, 2005: Girls Inc. briefing entitled "Girls Speak Out About Violence in their Lives." This briefing served to draw attention to the impact of violence against women, especially domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of gender-based violence, so that staff could learn more about how these types of violence affects young girls.

May 24, 2005: Women for Women International Afternoon Tea, which provided an opportunity to learn about the disproportionate impact war has on women and to meet the inspirational women who direct Women for Women International's programs in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Rwanda. Rep. Lois Capps, Women's Caucus Co-Vice Chair, spoke about her personal experience sponsoring women in Nigeria through Women for Women International.

May 25, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc., the American Association of University Women, the American Chemical Society, Girls Incorporated, and the Women's High-Tech Coalition, in conjunction with the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, and the Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) Education Caucus (Reps. Vern Ehlers and Mark Udall), briefing entitled "Advancing Women in Science." The briefing examined the challenges facing women scientists and efforts underway to advance women in science in both the private and public sectors.

July 14, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Cultural Competency: A Critical Component to Address Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities for Women."

October 18, 2005: Lifetime Television, Amnesty International USA & The Tahirih Justice Center in conjunction with the Congressional Human Rights Caucus and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues briefing entitled "Women and Girls as Global Commodities: An Examination of Human Trafficking and the International Marriage Broker Industry." The briefing included a screening of excerpts from the Lifetime original miniseries "Human Trafficking."

October 19, 2005: Department of Defense Briefing on Task Force on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies. In response to numerous allegations of sexual harassment and assault among cadets at the academies, the Task Force was formed in September 2004 and charged with reviewing the extent of this problem and developing recommendations for reform at the service academies. This briefing served as an update on the task force's work. The Dear Colleague for this briefing was circulated by Reps. Slaughter, Solis, Brown-Waite, Capito, Susan Davis, and Loretta Sanchez.

October 20, 2005: Aetna, the Financial Planning Association and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Women's Health: Health Benefits Literacy and Retirement Planning."

October 26, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Asset Building: The Path to Financial Independence for Women."

November 1, 2005: The Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Congressional Human Rights Caucus briefing entitled "Pakistan: Violence Against Women" featuring Mukhtaran Bibi, who was gang-raped on the orders of a village council in Pakistan as punishment for the alleged misconduct of her brother.

November 9, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc., the Women's Research and Education Institute, and Disabled American Veterans briefing entitled "Trailblazers: Women Veterans Share Their Stories."

December 6, 2005: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "The Status of Cervical Cancer Vaccine Research."

December 7, 2005: The Jacob's Institute for Women's Health briefing entitled "No Wonder We're All Confused: Hormone Therapy and the Communication of Medical Information."

January 10, 2006: amfAR (The Foundation for AIDS Research), the Society for Women's Health Research, and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "HIV/AIDS: The Disproportionate Impact on Women of Color in the U.S."

January 26, 2006: Girl Scouts of the USA and Women's Policy Inc. briefing entitled "A New Girl Scout Research Institute Report: The New Normal? What Girls Say About Healthy Living."

February 14, 2006: WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women and Heart Disease and the Society for Women's Health Research briefing entitled "The 10 Q Report: Advancing Women's Heart Health Through Improved Research, Diagnosis and Treatment."

March 8, 2006: The Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Iran Working Group, in conjunction with the Alliance of Iranian Women, International Women's Day briefing on the rights of women and children in Iran and their work to advance democracy.

March 30, 2006: NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby briefing entitled "Global Journey of Peace: Iraqi Women Speak."

April 3 – 7, 2006: Lifetime Television's 5th annual "Stop Violence Against Women Week in Washington" (April 3 - 7) brought together the nation's leading experts, advocates, and policy-makers for a series of special events in Washington, DC to send the message that violence against women affects us all and takes us all to stop it.

April 4, 2006: Lifetime Television, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV) advance screening of the documentary "Searching for Angela Shelton."

April 26, 2006: Washington Area Women's Foundation and Women's Policy Inc. briefing entitled "Stepping Stones: Increasing Economic Security for Low-Income Women."

April 27, 2006: The Century Council's briefing entitled "Girl Talk: Choices and Consequences of Underage Drinking," which highlighted a new resource to help discourage underage drinking among our nation's teenage girls. Members of the U.S. Women's Soccer Team, including Olympic medalist Julie Foudy and Phyllis Greenberger, President and CEO of the Society for Women's Health Research were on hand to highlight the importance of this initiative.

May 10, 2006: American Legacy Foundation and Women's Policy Inc. briefing entitled "Her Journey: Smoking's Presence Throughout Women's Lives."

May 15, 2006: Society for Women's Health Research briefing entitled "Bone Up on Calcium & Vitamin D Facts: Knowledge is Strength."

May 22, 2006: The Friends of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), in cooperation with Reps. Capito and Baldwin, Co-Chairs of the Women's Health Task Force, briefing entitled "Spotlight on NICHD: Consequences, Treatment, and Prevention of Obesity."

July 18, 2006: Genworth Financial, Inc. Long Term Care briefing entitled "The Impact of Long Term Care on Women: An Analysis of Women as Care Providers and Care Recipients."

July 18, 2006: Alliance for Microbicide Development, Global Campaign for Microbicides, International Partnership for Microbicides, and Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Microbicide Research, A Promising Prevention Strategy For HIV/AIDS: Can It Save Women's Lives?" Senator Barack Obama spoke at the briefing.

September 26, 2006: Society for Women's Health Research briefing entitled "From the Lab to the Clinic: Translating Women's Health Research into Practice."

November 15, 2006: Women's Policy, Inc., the Women's Research and Education Institute, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, and BPW/USA's Women Joining Forces Initiative briefing entitled "Trailblazers: Women Veterans Share Their Stories."

December 6, 2006: Women's Policy, Inc. briefing entitled "Expanding the Middle Class: Paths to Economic Self-Sufficiency for Women and their Families."

109TH CONGRESS LETTERS (CHRONOLOGICAL)

August 4, 2005: Letter to the Transnational Assembly of Iraq in support of the protection of women's rights in the Iraqi Constitution. This letter was a joint effort by the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and the Iraqi Women's Caucus. There were 35 signers total.

- Signers (34): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Ros-Lehtinen, Tauscher, Granger, Lee, E.B. Johnson, Moore, Biggert, Davis (Susan), Sanchez (Loretta), McCollum, Baldwin, Tubbs Jones, Schakowsky, Hart, Harman, Jackson-Lee, Slaughter, Brown, Kaptur, Maloney, Lowey, Matsui, Woolsey, Berkley, Herseth, Myrick, Pryce, Lofgren, McCarthy, Watson, Wasserman-Schultz.

November 4, 2005: Letter to House Appropriations Committee Chair and Ranking Member supporting the Bureau of Labor Statistics "Women Worker" data series.

- Signers (31): DeLauro, Solis, Brown-Waite, Baldwin, Bean, Berkley, Biggert, Capito, Capps, Carson, Davis, Eshoo, Herseth, Johnson (E.B.), Lee, Matsui, Maloney, McCarthy, McCollum, Millender-McDonald, Moore, Napolitano, Norton, Sanchez (Linda), Schakowsky, Schwartz, Slaughter, Tauscher, Wasserman-Schultz, Watson, Woolsey.

November 14, 2005: Letter to House and Senate Appropriations Committee Chairs and Ranking Members supporting Senate language regarding the Title IX policy clarification issued by the Department of Education in March 2005.

- Signers (30): Solis, Brown-Waite, Woolsey, Capps, Johnson (Nancy), Slaughter, Capito, McCarthy, Wasserman-Schultz, Tauscher, Maloney, Tubbs Jones, McCollum, Baldwin, Sanchez (Linda), Millender-McDonald, Napolitano, Waters, Berkley, Christensen, Harman, DeGette, Jackson-Lee, Moore, Schakowsky, Davis (Susan), Lofgren, Johnson (E.B.)
 - Reps. George Miller, Christopher Shays, Rob Simmons also signed the letter.

December 15, 2005: Letter to House and Senate Leadership asking for floor consideration of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) before adjournment of the first session of the 109th Congress (before the end of 2005).

- Signers (39): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Ros-Lehtinen, Pelosi, Capito, Slaughter, Biggert, Maloney, Hart, Tauscher, Wasserman-Schultz, McCarthy, E.B. Johnson, Baldwin, Matsui, Kilpatrick, Roybal-Allard, Moore, Norton, Christensen, Kaptur, Herseth, Carson, Tubbs Jones, Sanchez (Linda), Lowey, Millender-McDonald, Sanchez (Loretta), Velazquez, Napolitano, Schakowsky, Schwartz, Davis (Susan), McCollum, Berkley, Woolsey, Watson, Bean.

December 22, 2005: Dear Colleague on Violence Against Women in Africa cosigned by Co-Chairs of the Women's Caucus. This Dear Colleague was distributed to all Members of Congress and included a new briefing paper by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS about the disturbing connection between violence against women and HIV infection. Women in some African nations who are victims of violence are up to three times as likely to be infected with HIV.

May 2, 2006: Letter to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding pregnancy outcomes and birth defects related to prescription drugs.

- Signers (11): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Baldwin, Tubbs Jones, Hart, Capito, Lofgren, Maloney, Brown.

May 2, 2006: Letter to House Appropriations Committee Chair and Ranking Member urging rejection of budget provision to rescind funding for the Crime Victims Fund, as authorized by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). This letter was a joint effort by the Women's Caucus and the Victim's Rights Caucus, and 111 Members signed on in total.

- Signers (23): Brown-Waite, Solis, Harris, Capps, Maloney, Baldwin, Schakowsky, McCarthy, DeGette, Berkley, Jackson-Lee, Kelly, Matsui, Hart, Wasserman-Schultz, Tauscher, Johnson (Nancy), Herseth, Carson, Lee, Moore, DeLauro, Cubin.

May 5, 2006: Letter to House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Chairs and Ranking Members of jurisdiction in support of full funding for programs reauthorized or newly created by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the FY2007 appropriations bills.

- Signers (9): Solis and Brown-Waite (co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues; Poe, Costa, Harris (co-chairs of the Victim's Rights Caucus), Napolitano (CHC Chair), Watt (CBC Chair), Honda (CAPAC Chair), Lofgren (Member of House Committee on the Judiciary).

July 14, 2006: Letter to Attorney General Gonzales and Health and Human Services Secretary Leavitt in support of full funding for programs reauthorized or newly created by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the FY2008 budget. This letter was a joint effort by the Women's Caucus and the Victim's Rights Caucus, and 167 Members signed on in total.

- Signers (50): Solis, Brown-Waite, Harris, Lofgren, Wasserman-Schultz, Watson, Pryce, McKinney, Herseth, Bono, Schwartz, Bordallo, Berkley, Bean, Tubbs Jones, Baldwin, Hart, Schakowsky, McCollum, Tauscher, Cubin, Davis (Susan), Biggert, Moore, Capito, Christensen, Johnson (E.B.), DeGette, Carson, Napolitano, Kilpatrick, Capps, Lee, Norton, Ros-Lehtinen, DeLauro, Woolsey, Matsui, Lowey, Roybal-Allard, Maloney, Waters, Pelosi, Harman, Johnson (Nancy), Jackson Lee, Emerson, Brown, Millender-McDonald, Slaughter.

September 27, 2006: Letter to House Republican Leadership asking for floor consideration of the reauthorization of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program before the end of the 109th Congress.

- Signers (35): Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Pelosi, Baldwin, Myrick, DeLauro, Capito, Lowey, Davis (Jo Ann), Jackson-Lee, Harris, Schakowsky, Woolsey, Maloney, McCollum, Kaptur, Velazquez, Millender-McDonald, Lofgren, Sanchez (Linda), Berkeley, McCarthy, Norton, Wasserman-Schultz, Matsui, Bean, Moore (Gwen), Davis (Susan), Christensen, Tubbs Jones, Napolitano, Kilpatrick, Eshoo, Biggert.

109TH CONGRESS WOMEN MEMBER EVENTS (CHRONOLOGICAL)

February 2, 2005: Discovery Communications/Oxygen Network State of the Union ‘Pass the Gavel’ Reception in honor of women Members of the 109th Congress.

February 16, 2005: Women’s High-Tech Coalition, in partnership with Women In Bio hosted a reception honoring the newly-elected women Members of Congress.

March 9, 2005: Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues and Iraqi Women’s Caucus Meeting with Iraqi and Afghan women leaders in honor of International Women’s Day.

April 27, 2005: Women’s Policy Inc. New Member Welcome Reception for Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA): For any new women Members elected by special election, we hosted a welcoming reception for that new Member.

April 28, 2005: Take Our Daughters to Work Day (TODS) with Women’s Policy Inc., Girls Inc., and Girl Scouts of the USA paired girls with women Members of Congress to shadow them and their staff for a half day of learning and sharing experiences. This day was established by the Ms. Foundation for Women to create an opportunity for girls and boys to think about their expectations for the future while seeing the opportunities before them firsthand.

May 18, 2005: Women’s Health Member Meeting with the Department of Health and Human Services Coordinating Committee on Women’s Health: In recognition of Women’s Health Month, the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues held a Members-only meeting to provide an agency perspective of the pressing needs in women’s health research, education, and advocacy. Dr. Wanda Jones, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Women’s Health) made brief opening remarks on behalf of the Committee.

May 26, 2005: Annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony for Women Veterans: This annual event at the Arlington National Cemetery honored our nation’s servicewomen and women veterans for their courage and achievements, and remembered women who have died while on duty serving the United States. We honored outstanding senior female non-commissioned officers (NCOs) from the Air Force, the Army, the Coast Guard, the Marines, and the Navy.

June 8, 2005: Women’s Policy, Inc. briefing for women Members with Ambassador John Miller, Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the State Department, who discussed the 2005 Trafficking in Persons report. This briefing was supported by the Women’s Caucus Co-Chairs, Reps. Solis and Brown-Waite; Co-Vice chairs, Reps. Capps and Ros-Lehtinen; International Women’s Task Force Co-Chairs, Reps. McCollum and Pryce; and Reps. Maloney, Granger, Lowey, Harris, Millender-McDonald and Drake.

Jun 22, 2005: Women’s Policy, Inc. and Peace X Peace roundtable discussion with Members of the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues and the Iraqi Women’s Caucus. The meeting featured Dr. Naba Saleem Hamid, founder of New Horizons for Women and a Professor at Baghdad University. This event was supported by the Women’s Caucus Co-Chairs, Reps. Solis and Brown-Waite; Co-Vice chairs, Reps. Capps and Ros-Lehtinen; International Women’s Task

Force co-chairs, Reps. McCollum and Pryce; and Iraqi Women's Caucus Co-Chairs, Reps. Granger, Tauscher and Tom Osborne.

July 12, 2005: Rachel's Network dinner for women Members. This small, intimate gathering was an opportunity for women Members to share mutual interests and goals.

July 19, 2005: International Museum of Women lunch for women Members. The International Museum of Women is the first museum honoring the history, contributions and achievements of women worldwide. At the briefing, the International Museum of Women will preview their upcoming exhibit, "Imagining Ourselves," a powerful, positive voice with and for a new generation of women -- nearly one billion women worldwide -- in their twenties and thirties.

July 20, 2005: Women in Government Relations (WGR) afternoon tea honoring the women in the 109th Congress. The event served as a forum to discuss priority issues of concern for women Members. WGR is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to providing networking and educational opportunities to women in the field of government relations.

July 21, 2005: Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues roundtable discussion with Iraqi Minister of State for Women's Affairs, Azhar Sheikly, and Members of the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly about the drafting of the Iraq Constitution.

September 15, 2005: Women's Policy Inc. New Member Welcome Reception for Rep. Jean Schmidt (R-OH): For any new women Members elected by special election, we hosted a welcoming reception for that new Member.

January 31, 2006: Discovery Communications/Oxygen Network 2nd Annual State of the Union Reception Honoring Women Members of the 109th Congress. The event highlighted two initiatives that foster young women leaders.

March 8, 2006: In honor of International Women's Day, Iraqi and Afghani women legislators shadowed women Members of Congress, with the help and coordination of the State Department. The women Members gained understanding and newfound appreciation for the challenges faced by women legislators in those countries.

April 27, 2006: Take Our Daughters to Work Day (TODS) with Women's Policy Inc., Girls Inc., and Girl Scouts of the USA paired girls with women Members of Congress to shadow them and their staff for a half day of learning and sharing experiences. This day was established by the Ms. Foundation for Women to create an opportunity for girls and boys to think about their expectations for the future while seeing the opportunities before them firsthand.

May 23, 2006: Annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony for Women Veterans: This annual event at the Arlington National Cemetery honored our nation's servicewomen and women veterans for their courage and achievements, and remembered women who have died while on duty serving the United States. We honored outstanding senior female non-commissioned officers (NCOs) from the Air Force, the Army, the Coast Guard, the Marines, and the Navy.

July 11, 2006: National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) lunch for women Members. This special event was an opportunity for women Members to come together with women judges from around the country. The lunch was an opportunity for women from the judicial and legislative branches to build relationships between two complementary branches of government.

September 20, 2006: Reception celebrating the 15th season of PBS' "To the Contrary with Bonnie Erbe." The reception also honored women Members for their service in Congress.

109TH CONGRESS LEGISLATION

I. H.Con.Res. 90: Conveying the sympathy of Congress to the families of the young women murdered in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, and encouraging increased United States involvement in bringing an end to these crimes.

Summary: This resolution, authored by Rep. Solis, addresses the murders of more than 400 women in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, mainly in the border city of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. H. Con. Res. 90 condemns the ongoing abduction and murders of young women in Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico; expresses condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims; and proposes a set of actions to investigate and prevent the crimes.

The Women's Caucus co-chairs and co-vice chairs signed on to Dear Colleagues when H.Con.Res. 90 was introduced asking Members to cosponsor the resolution. Due to the hard work of Members and other groups, H.Con.Res. 90 passed the House and Senate in May 2006 with 143 bipartisan cosponsors.

II. H.Res. 357: Honoring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor

Summary: This resolution, authored by Rep. Brown-Waite, honors Justice Sandra Day O'Connor on the occasion of her retirement from the United States Supreme Court. The resolution also commends Justice Sandra Day O'Connor for her hard work and dedication to the law, and recognizes her as a pioneer for women in law, helping women become a permanent and integral part of the legal profession.

Reps. Brown-Waite and Solis, co-chairs of the Women's Caucus, sent a joint Dear Colleague urging Members to cosponsor H.Res. 357. 26 women Members cosponsored the resolution, and it passed the House of Representatives unanimously in March 2006.

III. H.R. 5472, the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act of 2006

Summary: H.R. 5472 was sponsored by Rep. Sue Myrick, and both Rep. Myrick and Rep. Baldwin, co-chair of the Women's Health Task Force, signed a Dear Colleague urging Members to cosponsor this important legislation to reauthorize the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. Established in 1991, the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) provides low-income women with little or no health insurance with breast and cervical cancer screening, education, outreach and case management services. Administered by the CDC, the NBCCEDP provides access to mammograms, pap tests, surgical consultations and diagnostic testing.

H.R. 5472 passed the House in December 2006, and was cosponsored by 37 women Members of Congress.

**109TH CONGRESS PHOTO GALLERY OF
CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS FOR WOMEN'S
ISSUES EVENTS**

Discovery Communications/Oxygen Network State of the Union ‘Pass the Gavel’ Reception in honor of women Members of the 109th Congress (February 2, 2005).



From l-r: Rep. Hilda L. Solis, 109th Congress Women's Caucus Co-Chair; Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, 108th Congress Women's Caucus Co-Chair; Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite, 109th Congress Women's Caucus Co-Chair; Rep. Louise Slaughter, 108th Congress Women's Caucus Co-Chair.



Back row, from l-r: Reps. Nancy Johnson, Gwen Moore, Lois Capps, Stephanie Herseth, Lynn Woolsey, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick, Tammy Baldwin, Allyson Schwartz, Donna Christensen. Front row, from l-r: Reps. Judy Biggert, Nita Lowey, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Louise Slaughter, Hilda L. Solis, Ginny Brown-Waite, Madeleine Bordallo, Shelley Moore Capito.

Discovery Communications/Oxygen Network State of the Union ‘Pass the Gavel’ Reception in honor of women Members of the 109th Congress (continued).



From l-r: Reps. Tammy Baldwin, Nita Lowey, Lois Capps, Carolyn C. Kilpatrick, Nancy Pelosi, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Hilda L. Solis.



From l-r: Reps. Marcy Kaptur, Allyson Schwartz, Diane Watson, Susan Davis, Rosa DeLauro, Hilda L. Solis.

Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and Iraqi Women's Caucus Meeting with Iraqi and Afghan women leaders in honor of International Women's Day (March 9, 2005).



From l-r: Reps. Susan Davis, Jane Harman, Iraqi women, Reps. Hilda L. Solis, Kay Granger.



During the meeting, Women Members participating, from l, counterclockwise: Reps. Susan Davis, Kay Granger, Judy Biggert (obscured), Hilda Solis, Jane Harman, Ellen Tauscher.

Lifetime Television’s “Stop Violence Against Women Week” event: A Salute to Leading Men Committed to Ending Violence Against Women (March 10, 2005).



From l-r: Reps. Diane Watson, Lois Capps, Ginny Brown-Waite, Lifetime representative, Rep. James Sensenbrenner, John Conyers, Hilda L. Solis.

Women’s Policy Inc. Welcoming Reception for Congresswoman Doris Matsui (April 27, 2005).



From l-r: Reps. Diane Watson, Hilda L. Solis, Ginny Brown-Waite, Doris Matsui, Cindy Hall (President of Women’s Policy Inc.), Rep. Lois Capps.

Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues Annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery (May 26, 2005)



Reps. Hilda L. Solis (left) and Lois Capps (right) carry the wreath to the Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery with honored servicewomen.



From l-r: Honored servicewoman, Rep. Susan Davis, honored servicewoman, Rep. Corinne Brown, General Wilma Vaught, Reps. Melissa Bean (obscured), Hilda L. Solis, honored servicewomen, Reps. Heather Wilson, Lois Capps, Grace Napolitano, Carolyn Maloney, Sheila Jackson Lee, Betty McCollum, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Jane Harman.

**Rachel's Network dinner for Women's Caucus Members
(7/17/05)**



From l-r: Reps. Susan Davis, Rosa DeLauro, Donna Christensen, Sue Kelly, Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, Melissa Bean, Ginny Brown-Waite, Allyson Schwartz, Winsome McIntosh (founder of Rachel's Network), Reps. Diana DeGette, Hilda L. Solis, Lois Capps, Darlene Hooley, Nancy Johnson, Diane Watson.

**Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues roundtable
discussion with Iraqi Minister of State for Women's Affairs,
Azhar Sheikly, and Members of the Iraqi Transitional
National Assembly (July 21, 2005)**



From l-r: Reps. Jan Schakowsky, Ginny Brown-Waite, Nita Lowey, Iraqi women and translator, Reps. Lois Capps, Carolyn Maloney, Iraqi women, Reps. Marcy Kaptur, Nancy Johnson.

Presidential Signing of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization (January 5, 2006)



From l-r: Rep. Mark Green, First Lady Laura Bush, Sen. Orrin Hatch, Rep. James Sensenbrenner, President George W. Bush, Rep. Rick Larsen, Women's Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Hilda L. Solis, Rep. Anthony Weiner, Rep. Adam Schiff, Sen. Patrick Leahy, Sen. Arlen Specter.

Discovery Communications/Oxygen Network State of the Union Reception in honor of women Members of Congress (2/1/06)



From l-r, 1st row: Reps. Doris Matsui, Jean Schmidt, Shelley Berkley, Nita Lowey, Hilda L. Solis, Ginny Brown-Waite, Carolyn Maloney, Debbie Wasserman-Schultz. From l-r, 2nd row: Reps. Susan Davis, Lois Capps, Carolyn Kilpatrick, Zoe Lofgren.

International Women's Day Shadow Day with Iraqi and Afghani women legislators, coordinated by U.S. State Department (March 8, 2006).



Women Members pictured from l-r: Reps. Judy Biggert, Kay Granger, Ellen Tauscher (obscured), Susan Davis, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. Also pictured, Karen Hughes, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

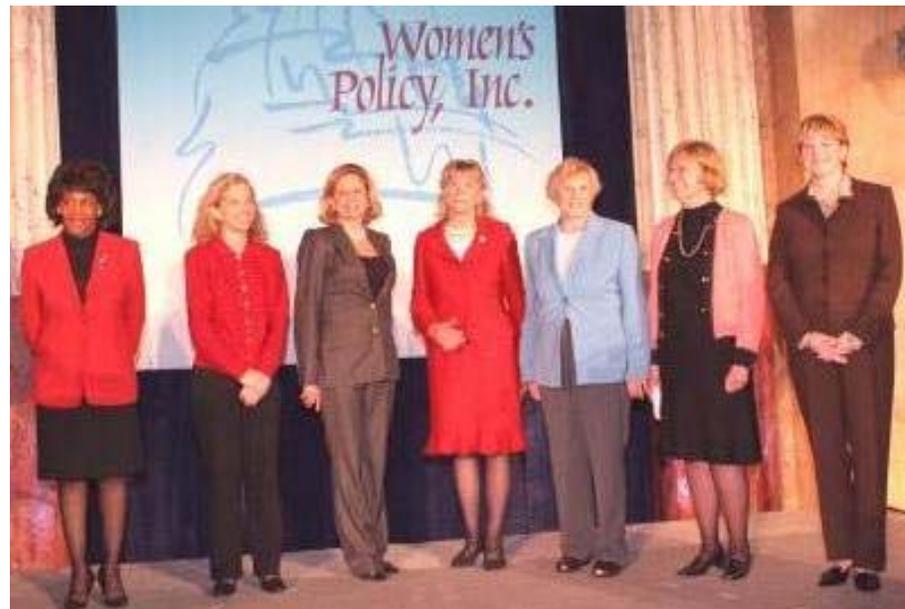


Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite, Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues (on r), with her International Women's Day shadow partner.

Women's Policy Inc. (WPI) Annual Dinner (March 14, 2006)



From l-r: Rep. Hilda L. Solis, Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues; Rep. Nita Lowey, Board Member of WPI and former Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues; Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite, Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues.



Women's Policy Inc. Annual Dinner honorees: Women Members on the Financial Services Committee: Reps. Maxine Waters, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Carolyn Maloney, Sue Kelly, Ginny Brown-Waite, Judy Biggert, and Melissa Bean.

Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues Annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery (May 23, 2006)



From l-r: Rep. Susan Davis, honored servicewoman, Reps. Juanita Millender-McDonald, Katherine Harris, Carolyn McCarthy, Ginny Brown-Waite, Hilda L. Solis, Irene Trowell-Harris (Director, Center for Women Veterans, Department of Veterans Affairs), Rep. Jane Harman, Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, honored servicewoman, Rep. Lois Capps, honored servicewomen.



Women Members pictured: Reps. Lucille Roybal-Allard, Hilda L. Solis, Ginny Brown-Waite, Katherine Harris, Carolyn McCarthy, Lois Capps, Jane Harman, Juanita Millender-McDonald, Heather Wilson (obscured), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

National Association for Women Judges lunch for women Members (July 11, 2006)



From l-r: Women's Caucus Co-Chair, Hilda L. Solis, and Judge Vanessa Ruiz (President of the National Association of Women Judges).



From bottom l., clockwise: Reps. Hilda L. Solis, Eddie Bernice Johnson, woman judge, Reps. Carolyn Maloney, Jan Schakowsky.

APPENDIX OF 109TH CONGRESS LETTERS SENT BY CO-CHAIRS OF CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS FOR WOMEN'S ISSUES (CHRONOLOGICAL)

Letters:

- I. **August 4, 2005:** Letter to the Transnational Assembly of Iraq in support of the protection of women's rights in the Iraqi Constitution.
- II. **November 4, 2005:** Letter to House Appropriations Committee Chair and Ranking Member supporting the Bureau of Labor Statistics "Women Worker" data series.
- III. **November 14, 2005:** Letter to House and Senate Appropriations Committee Chairs and Ranking Members supporting Senate language regarding the Title IX policy clarification.
- IV. **December 15, 2005:** Letter to House and Senate Leadership asking for floor consideration of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) before adjournment of the first session of the 109th Congress (before the end of 2005).
- V. **December 22, 2005:** Dear Colleague on Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS in Africa cosigned by Co-Chairs of the Women's Caucus.
- VI. **May 2, 2006:** Letter to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding pregnancy outcomes and birth defects related to prescription drugs.
- VII. **May 2, 2006:** Letter to House Appropriations Committee Chair and Ranking Member urging rejection of budget provision to rescind funding for the Crime Victims Fund, as authorized by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA).
- VIII. **May 5, 2006:** Letter to House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Chairs and Ranking Members of jurisdiction in support of full funding for programs reauthorized or newly created by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the FY2007 appropriations bills.
- IX. **July 14, 2006:** Letter to Attorney General Gonzales and Health and Human Services Secretary Leavitt in support of full funding for programs reauthorized or newly created by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the FY2008 budget.
- X. **September 27, 2006:** Letter to House Republican Leadership asking for floor consideration of the reauthorization of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program before the end of the 109th Congress.

August 4, 2005

His Excellency Jalal Talabani
President of Iraq

Dear Mr. President,

As Members of the United States House of Representatives and Senate, we commend the Transitional National Assembly and the people of Iraq on the progress you have achieved toward a free and a representative democratic government. However, the central principle of true democracy is liberty and justice for all, and it is our understanding that the current draft of the constitution contains provisions that weaken the liberties and freedoms of Iraqi women. These provisions raise great concerns among us.

We are distressed with the proposal to eliminate the requirement that secures 25 percent of parliamentary seats for women. Today, Iraqi women occupy 31 percent of the seats in the National Assembly. These women are playing a critical role in the future of Iraq and should not be denied their rightful place in society.

We also have concerns with the article that promotes the role of tribes in law and civil society. Historically women have suffered an inferior status under such a tribal system. Instead, the Assembly should include provisions in Iraq's Constitution that provide social care and security to Iraq's women, mothers, and children.

Of greatest concern, however, is the provision that provides equal rights for women *unless those rights contradict Sharia Law*. The Transitional National Assembly should support principles of democracy that guarantee human and women's rights, without placing caveats.

More than 2,000 women ran for office in Iraq's historic January 2005 parliamentary elections. As the Transitional National Assembly continues in their efforts, we strongly encourage the Assembly to support provisions that solidify the rights of Iraqi women in the new constitution. While women's rights were severely limited in the past, Iraq now has an historic opportunity to expand their roles and afford women a strong voice in the country's government. We recognize the need to affirm the spirit and free the energies of those women who have spent countless hours, years, and lifetimes working for the basic human right of equal protection under the constitution.

The central principles of a true democracy – liberty, justice, and representative government – must apply equally to women. We, as Americans and Members of Congress, continue to stand with you and the people of Iraq as your country grows and democracy takes root.

Sincerely,

Reps. Solis, Brown-Waite, Capps, Ros-Lehtinen, Tauscher, Granger, Lee, E.B. Johnson, Moore, Biggert, Davis (Susan), Sanchez (Loretta), McCollum, Baldwin, Tubbs Jones, Schakowsky, Hart, Harman, Jackson-Lee, Slaughter, Brown, Kaptur, Maloney, Lowey, Matsui, Woolsey, Berkley, Herseth, Myrick, Pryce, Lofgren, McCarthy, Watson, Wasserman-Schultz, Osborne.

August 4, 2005

The Honorable Dr. Hajim al-Hasani
Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly

Dear Mr. Speaker,

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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 4, 2005

Representative Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Services, and Related Agencies
Agencies Appropriations
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative David Obey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related
Related Agencies Appropriations
2314 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

As Members of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, we urge you and the other Conferees finalizing the Fiscal Year 2006 Appropriations Bill for Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies to accept the Senate provision requiring the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to continue collecting the data on women workers in the Current Employment Statistics Survey (CES). These critical data are not collected by any other survey and without them we cannot get a complete and accurate picture of women's employment. This provision had strong support in the Senate and was passed by voice vote.

The CES survey of payroll records covers over 300,000 businesses and provides detailed industry data on employment, hours, and earnings of non-farm workers on a monthly basis. As such, it represents a critical, ongoing source of employment information for policymakers and researchers. With a gender breakdown, the payroll survey is capable of painting a reliable picture of where women are working across industries and business cycles. Without a gender breakdown, that picture becomes far more difficult to obtain.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) proposes to substitute data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) for the CES' "Women Workers" data. While the CPS data is valuable for other types of information, its smaller sampling size produces a greater margin for error than the CES survey, as the Bureau itself has noted. Moreover, the CPS' reliance on household interviews introduces the possibility of subjective reporting bias that does not exist with the payroll survey. Because the CES data is more accurate, the CPS data is simply not an adequate substitute for it.

BLS' other reasons for discontinuing the CES data do not stand up under scrutiny either. For example, BLS claims that discontinuing the "Women Workers" Series would reduce the burden on employers. In support of this claim, BLS misleadingly stated that there was a low response rate to this inquiry. In fact, the response rate to this query is 86% -- the second highest of any question on the CES Survey. Further, the data about women workers is collected from a single question in a survey that employers otherwise are still required to fill out. Finally, businesses clearly have not found providing this data burdensome - in fact, the only business organizations that submitted comments to BLS on this issue all supported continuing the data collection.

Researchers use this important data - despite BLS' claims to the contrary. Just this past month, the Center for Economic and Policy Research issued a report, "Gender Bias in the Current Economic Recovery? Declining Employment Rates for Women in the 21st Century," based on the Women Worker Series in the CES. Further, many of the thousands of comments submitted to BLS in support of this data collection came from researchers at organizations like the New York Federal Reserve Bank and the Consortium of Social Science Associations.

There is also wide-spread public support for this data collection. During the original comment period, five thousand comments were submitted - running at least 9 to 1 in support of continuing the data collection. The only comments submitted by employers were in support of the continued collection of the "Women Workers" Series.

As legislators committed to America's working women, we have a special interest in this data continuing to be collected. We strongly urge you to accept the Senate's provision requiring BLS to continue collecting the Women Workers Series on the Current Employment Statistics Survey (CES) in the Fiscal Year 2006 Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



HILDA L. SOLIS
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues



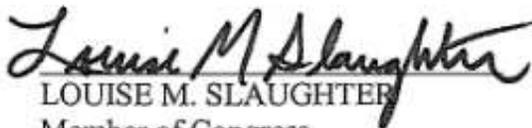
GINNY BROWN-WAITE
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues



ROSA L. DeLAURO
Member of Congress



LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress



LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER
Member of Congress



SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO
Member of Congress



DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ
Member of Congress



ELLEN O. TAUSCHER
Member of Congress

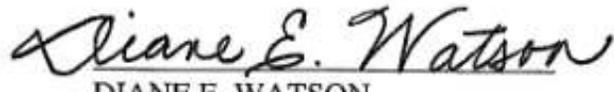

TAMMY BALDWIN
Member of Congress

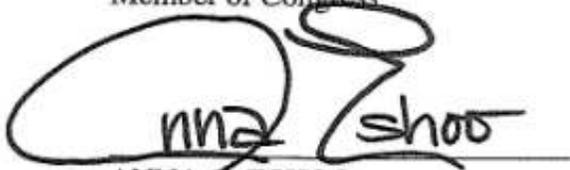

JUDY BIGGERT
Member of Congress

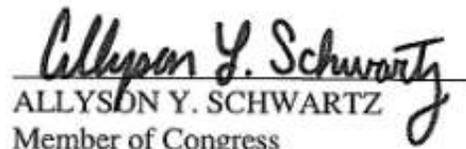

JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD
Member of Congress

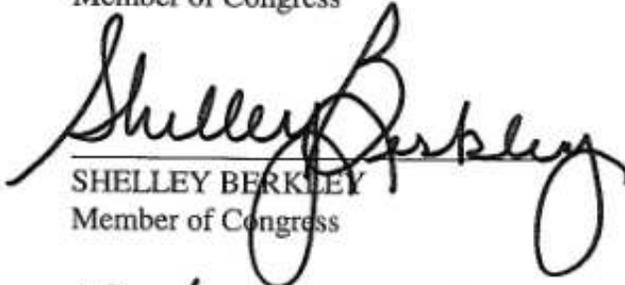

CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

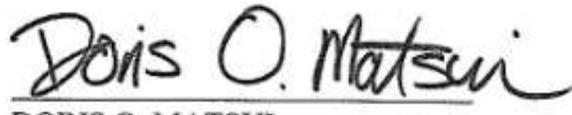

CAROLYN MCCARTHY
Member of Congress


DIANE E. WATSON
Member of Congress

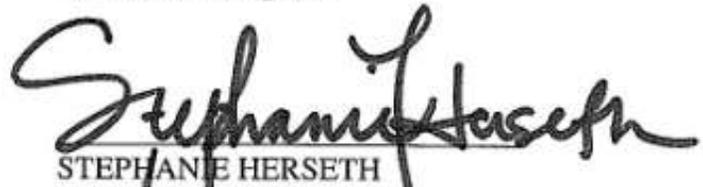

ANNA G. ESHOO
Member of Congress


ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ
Member of Congress

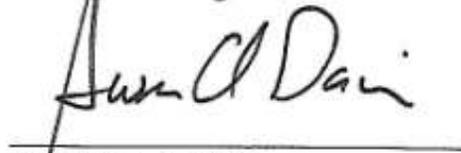

SHELLEY BERKLEY
Member of Congress


DORIS O. MATSUI
Member of Congress


BETTY MCCOLLUM
Member of Congress


STEPHANIE HERSETH
Member of Congress


GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
Member of Congress


SUSAN A. DAVIS
Member of Congress



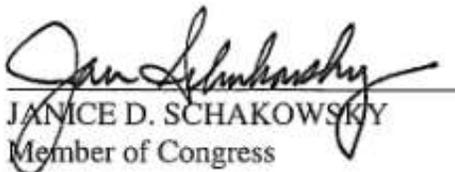
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
Member of Congress



LYNN WOOLSEY
Member of Congress



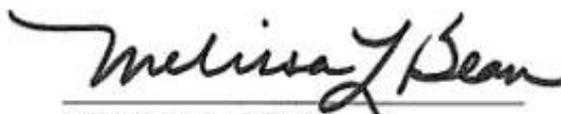
BARBARA LEE
Member of Congress



JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress



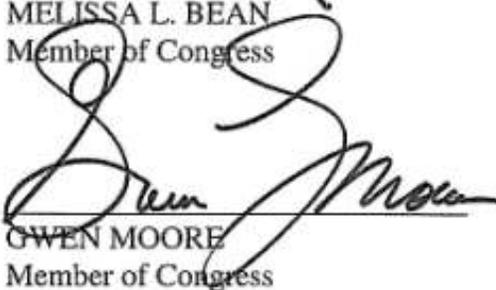
JULIA CARSON
Member of Congress



MELISSA L. BEAN
Member of Congress



EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON
Member of Congress



GWEN MOORE
Member of Congress



LINDA T. SANCHEZ
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 14, 2005

The Honorable Arlen Specter
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, HHS
and Education Appropriations
186 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, HHS
and Education Appropriations
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS and Education Appropriations
123 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS and Education Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Specter, Ranking Member Harkin, Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We urge you to accept the Senate language regarding Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Department of Education's March 17, 2005 policy guidance entitled "Additional Clarification of the Intercollegiate Athletic Policy: Three Part Test – Part Three" in the final Fiscal Year 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Conference Report.

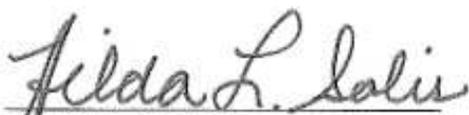
For over thirty years, Title IX has opened doors by giving women and girls an equal opportunity to participate in student sports, and we are concerned that the Department's proposal could unfairly reduce their opportunities for participation in the future. Under the Department's new guidance, schools that provide fewer sports opportunities to women can be considered to have accommodated female students and complied with Title IX, based solely on the results of a student survey. If female students do not reply to a survey emailed to them, the Department will assume that they are not interested in additional sports activities. We are concerned that a survey alone cannot reliably measure students' interest in sports. Many students may not respond to, or even open, email surveys.

The new guidance also does not require colleges to weigh other factors they have traditionally had to consider, such as coaches' and administrators' opinions, or women's athletic participation at nearby high schools or in recreational leagues, even though these factors are important guides to female students' interest and potential. By contrast, in answering a survey, students who have been denied equal opportunity in sports may express only tentative interest in sports or confidence in their skills. Such surveys may actually do little more than reflect the current denial of equal opportunity, rather than the students' true interest and potential. We are concerned that such surveys would provide colleges an easy means of evading Title IX's goal of equal opportunity.

The Senate language responds to these concerns by requiring the Department of Education to prepare a report on the use of surveys by institutions of higher education. The report will include what other information was considered in assessing student interest and the decisions made about athletic opportunities at these institutions. The Senate language further directs the Department of Education not to expend funds on activities associated with this guidance until the conferees have adequate time to review the report.

Title IX has been an extraordinary success in opening up new worlds of participation in sports by young women and girls, and it would be a serious mistake to roll back that progress. We urge you to accept the Senate language regarding Title IX and the Additional Clarification to ensure that the new guidance does not weaken enforcement of Title IX in athletics.

Sincerely,



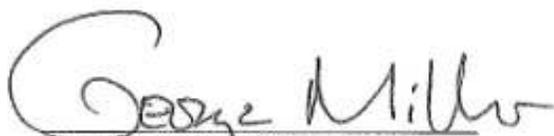
HILDA L. SOLIS

Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues



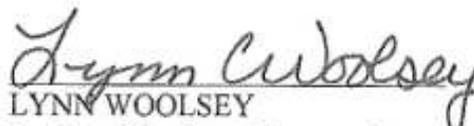
GINNY BROWN-WAITE

Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues



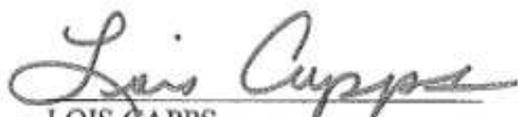
GEORGE MILLER

Ranking Member, Committee on Education and the Workforce



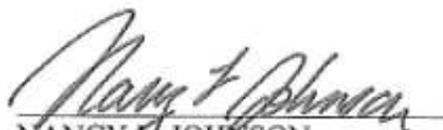
LYNN WOOLSEY

Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Education Reform



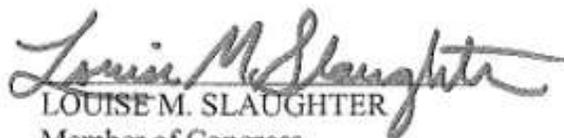
LOIS GAPPS

Member of Congress



NANCY L. JOHNSON

Member of Congress



LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER

Member of Congress



SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

Member of Congress



CAROLYN MCCARTHY

Member of Congress

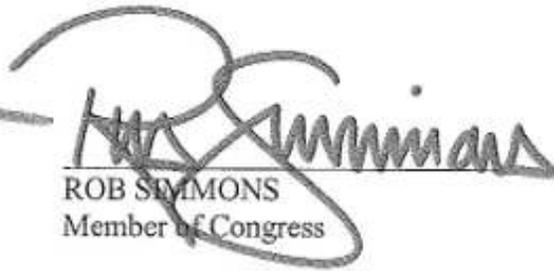


CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

Member of Congress



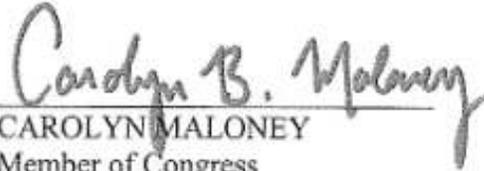
DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ
Member of Congress



ROB SIMMONS
Member of Congress



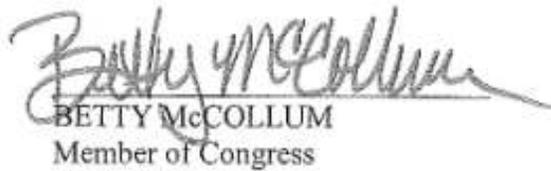
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CAROLYN MALONEY
Member of Congress



STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES
Member of Congress



BETTY McCOLLUM
Member of Congress



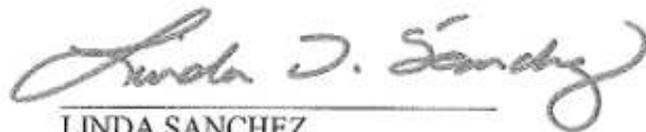
TAMMY BALDWIN
Member of Congress



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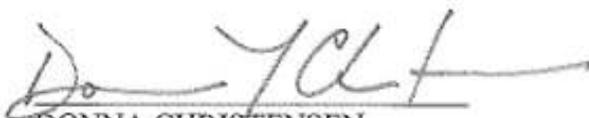
GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
Member of Congress



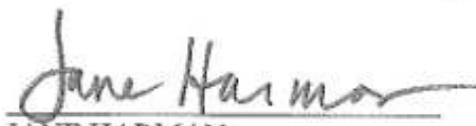
MAXINE WATERS
Member of Congress



SHELLEY BERKLEY
Member of Congress



DONNA CHRISTENSEN
Member of Congress



JANE HARMAN
Member of Congress



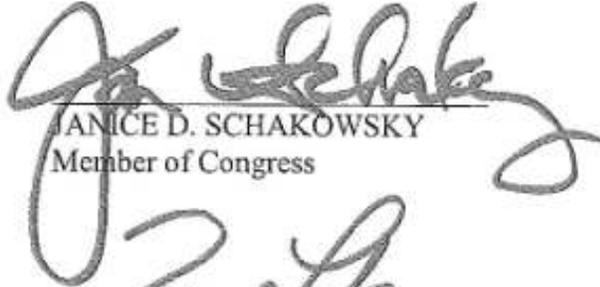
DIANA DeGETTE
Member of Congress



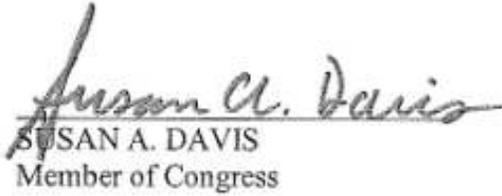
SHEILA JACKSON-LEE
Member of Congress



GWEN MOORE
Member of Congress



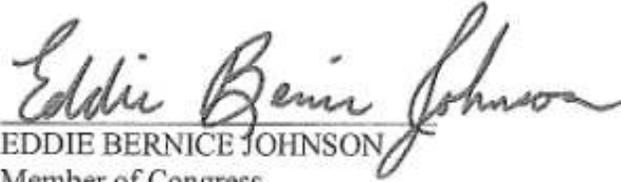
JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress



SUSAN A. DAVIS
Member of Congress



ZOE LOFGREN
Member of Congress



EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2005

The Honorable Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House
U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Frist
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert and Majority Leader Frist:

As Members of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, we are writing to strongly urge floor consideration of the conference report of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization before Congress adjourns this session. For more than 10 years, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has helped protect women in this country from domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. With a strong, comprehensive reauthorization, our progress in the fight to end violence against women can continue to grow.

Since the first Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was enacted in 1994, access to services and resources for victims of violence and their families has been vastly improved. Community programs funded through VAWA continue to aid law enforcement officers and prosecutors, encourage stronger arrest policies, and help prevent domestic violence and child abuse through education and outreach. VAWA has also helped establish and operate training programs for victim advocates and counselors, and train probation and parole officers who work with released sex offenders. We have seen a reduction in sexual abuse of runaway and homeless street youth. VAWA has also led to the creation of battered women's shelters, rape prevention and education programs, and community programs on domestic violence awareness and prevention. Overall, VAWA has made a real difference in the lives of women and children, who no longer suffer in silence.

Despite the success of VAWA, we still have much work to do. One out of every four women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime, and only 14 percent of domestic assaults come to the attention of police. Equally alarming is that young women, ages 16 to 24, experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence. Nearly two-thirds of women who reported being raped, physically assaulted, or stalked since age 18 were victimized by a current or former intimate partner.

We urge to you to work with conferees to produce a comprehensive VAWA conference report that strengthens and improves our efforts to combat violence against women. This landmark piece of legislation was achieved in part by the bipartisan efforts of women Members of Congress, and we urge its speedy passage.

Thank you for your attention to this vital issue.


HILDA L. SOLIS
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues


GINNY BROWN-WAITE
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues

Lois Capps

LOIS CAPPS

Co-Vice Chair, Congressional Caucus
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Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

Co-Vice Chair, Congressional Caucus
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Nancy Pelosi

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House Democratic Leader

Shelley Moore Capito

SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter

LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER

Member of Congress

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JUDY BIGGERT

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Carolyn B. Maloney

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Carolyn McCarthy

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Member of Congress

Tammy Baldwin

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Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui

DORIS MATSUI

Member of Congress

Carolyn C. Kilpatrick

CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK

Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard

LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

Member of Congress



GWEN MOORE
Member of Congress



ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
Member of Congress



DONNA CHRISTENSEN
Member of Congress



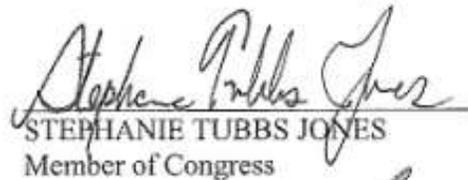
MARCY KAPTUR
Member of Congress



STEPHANIE HERSETH
Member of Congress



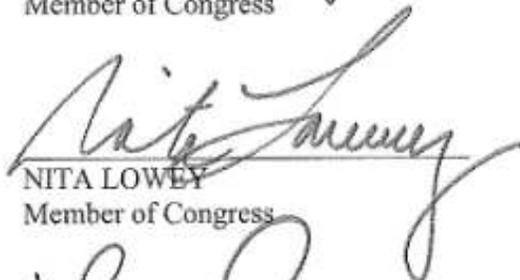
JULIA CARSON
Member of Congress



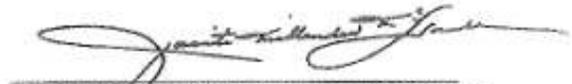
STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES
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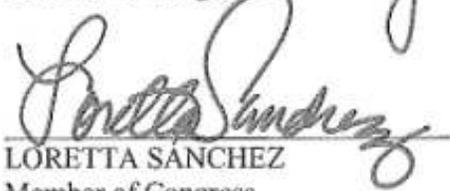
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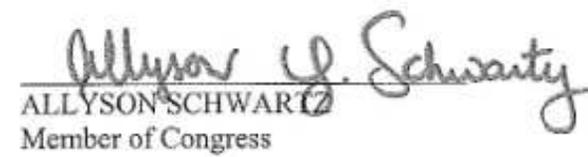
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GRACE NAPOLITANO
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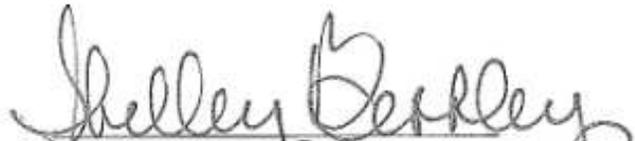


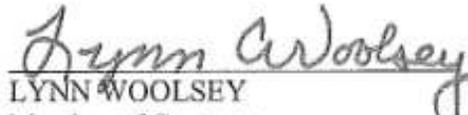
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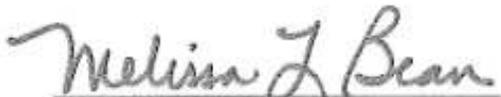
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MELISSA BEAN
Member of Congress

December 20, 2005

Violence Against Women and AIDS: New Brief Details Disturbing Links

Dear Colleague:

As Co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, we are working to address the increasingly important global challenge of stopping violence against women. At the same time, we must recognize the dangerous connections between violence against women and the global AIDS pandemic. Numerous studies from around the world show that women and girls who are subjected to, or fear, violence are often at least three times more vulnerable to HIV infection and less able to access essential HIV prevention, treatment, and care services.

The attached brief, "Stop Violence Against Women: Fight AIDS," is the second in an ongoing series from the UNAIDS-led Global Coalition on Women and AIDS. On November 25, we commemorated the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which puts this critical issue in the spotlight and underscores the troubling realities for women who are victims of violence. As the brief details, millions of women and girls around the world are subjected to violence every day, depriving them of the tools and opportunities they need to protect and provide for themselves and their families in a world with AIDS. In order to fight AIDS around the world effectively, we must commit to stop violence against women and girls.

Fortunately, many innovative programs are already working to address violence against women and its links to AIDS. By addressing harmful social and cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women through community-based training and dialogue, promoting economic opportunities for women and girls through microfinance to enable them to avoid or escape violence, and better bridging violence and AIDS programs, these efforts help women and girls stay safe from HIV -- and build a better future for their communities and countries.

We have made important progress, but we can and must do much more. We hope that you will review the attached brief to learn about some steps we can take to stop violence against women and stop the spread of AIDS around the world.

Sincerely,

GINNY BROWN-WAITE
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues

HILDA L. SOLIS
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN FIGHT AIDS



A UNAIDS Initiative

**The Global Coalition
on Women and AIDS**

WHAT'S REAL

ISSUE #2



Photo Credit: UNAIDS/W.Phillips

"We have to speak more and more about violence. Because wherever you find violence – whether it's physical, psychological, or sexual – there will be AIDS. HIV entered my life through violence, as it has for so many, and we must actively commit to bring this to an end."

Violeta Ross, National Chair of the Bolivian Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (REDBOL)



Photo Credit: UNAIDS

Violence against women is a global health crisis of epidemic proportions and often a cause and consequence of HIV.¹ Violence and the threat of violence dramatically increase the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV by making it difficult or impossible for women to abstain from sex, to get their partners to be faithful, or to use a condom. Violence is also a barrier for women in accessing HIV prevention, care, and treatment services. That is why the UNAIDS-led Global Coalition on Women and AIDS² has made stopping violence against women a top priority.

- In Kenya, the 2003 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) showed 68% of women agreed that a husband would be justified in beating his wife, including if she refused to have sex with him.⁴
- Reports from a range of nations, including Thailand, South Africa, and New Zealand indicate that between 20 and 44% of men admit that they are violent towards their wives or intimate partners.⁷

High rates of violence make women more vulnerable

Growing evidence from around the world shows that a large proportion of women and girls are subjected to violence by family members, acquaintances, and strangers.³

- A multi-country study by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that 59% of women in Ethiopia and 50% in Bangladesh reported sexual violence by an intimate partner; and 34% of women in Brazil and 47% in Tanzania said they had experienced physical violence.⁴
- A multi-site study by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) found that almost 40% of Indian women interviewed reported physical violence; 26% reported severe physical abuse – of whom half reported being beaten during pregnancy.⁵



Photo Credit: WHO/UNAIDS/ L. Gubb

Violence against women increases their risk of HIV infection

Numerous studies from around the globe show the growing links between violence against women and HIV. These studies demonstrate that HIV infected women are more likely to have experienced violence, and that women who have experienced violence are at higher risk for HIV.⁸

- Studies from Rwanda, Tanzania, and South Africa indicate that the risk for HIV among women who have experienced violence may be up to three times higher than among those who have not.⁹
- A Horizons report found that HIV infected women in Tanzania were significantly more likely to have had a violent partner in their lifetime, and to have experienced physical or sexual violence with their current partner. The report also found that younger HIV-positive women were ten times more likely to have experienced violence than HIV-negative women their age.¹⁰

Violence against women is a fundamental violation of their human rights and is often fueled by longstanding social and cultural norms that reinforce its acceptability in society – by both men and women.

- Sexual violence against women has been a feature of recent conflicts from around the world, including in the Darfur region of Sudan, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia. During the 1994 Rwandan genocide, an estimated 250,000 women were subjected to sexual violence as a tool of genocide, and many later became HIV-positive.¹¹
- A multi-country WHO review found that fear of violence was a barrier to HIV disclosure for an average of 25% of participating women, with rates reaching as high as 51% in Kenya.¹²

Violence impedes access to essential AIDS services

Violence, or fear of violence, makes it difficult for women and girls to disclose their HIV status or to access essential AIDS services.

- A study in Uganda found that women were often powerless to access AIDS services because their husbands physically attacked, threatened, and intimidated them.¹³
- A report on Cambodia pointed to fear of domestic violence as a contributing factor in the low numbers of women accessing voluntary HIV counseling and testing services at antenatal clinics.¹⁴

The Chelstone Clinic, in Lusaka, Zambia, provides free AIDS treatment to women who test positive for HIV in the antenatal clinic. Still, some 60% of clinically eligible women decide to “opt out” of treatment, due in part to their fears of violence and abandonment that might result from disclosing their HIV status. A counselor at the clinic explained that many women who disclose their status, or try to encourage their partners to be tested, “were beaten and withdrew from the program.” Despite the program’s success in treating some 750 women, violence continues to present challenges to its work.¹⁵

WHAT WORKS

A range of promising programs are already working to prevent violence against women and HIV infections among women and girls.

- By fostering greater community dialogue, **Stepping Stones** workshops in 29 countries – mostly in Africa but increasingly in Asia and Europe – have helped to reduce the acceptability and prevalence of violence and to promote discussion and awareness about HIV. By changing attitudes and behavior related to violence against women, and reducing stigma and discrimination in the community, these programs work to lower HIV vulnerability for women.¹⁶
- The **Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS & Gender Equity (IMAGE)** program in Limpopo Province, South Africa integrates HIV prevention and violence training into its microfinance programs for rural women.¹⁷ The aim: to provide women with small loans to start a business and gain greater economic independence. When combined with training on HIV prevention, the program empowers women to stand up to violence, stay safe from HIV, and changes the way they are perceived by their families and communities.¹⁸
- Also in South Africa, the **Men as Partners (MAP)** program uses community-based workshops to challenge the attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate violence against women and increase their vulnerability to HIV. Through frank discussions of gender stereotypes and power dynamics, the program engages men and boys as positive forces for change in reducing violence, particularly as it contributes to the spread of HIV. A preliminary evaluation showed that workshop participants were more likely to believe that men and women should have equal rights and that wife-beating was wrong.¹⁹
- With funding from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, the **Soma Development Organization** in Puntland, Somalia conducts psychosocial training of peer counselors on violence and HIV. Counselors, who include traditional birth attendants and other health workers, are taught to recognize and respond to the signs of violence, and to provide appropriate referrals to AIDS services.²⁰
- Other programs provide essential services for survivors of violence, particularly given their increased risk for HIV:
- The **Nairobi Women’s Hospital Gender Violence Recovery Centre** in Kenya provides specialized medical and psychological treatment, including AIDS services, to survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse. To date, the Centre has provided medical assistance and counseling to more than 3,000 women, including basic lab tests and medical examinations, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP),²¹ HIV tests, and interventions to prevent mother-to-child transmission (pMTCT).²²
- The **Cambodian Women’s Crisis Center (CWCC)** assists abused and trafficked women through its crisis shelters, drop-in center, and counseling program, which includes information on HIV. CWCC also provides referral to clients for HIV testing and, where appropriate, to AIDS care, including anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment.²³

WHAT'S NEEDED

Addressing violence against women is essential to achieve key international targets articulated in the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) Declaration of Commitment and the Millennium Development Goals, such as reducing new HIV infections, increasing access to AIDS services, and promoting women's human rights and gender equality.²⁴ This will require far greater acceptance of the links between violence against women and HIV, and enhanced political leadership, resource investments, and sustained commitment at national and international levels.



Photo Credit: UNAIDS/Hervé Vincent-AVECC

Actions for National Governments

- Integrate strategies to reduce violence against women into national AIDS plans, and strategies to increase access to essential AIDS services within violence prevention efforts – and ensure that these linkages are funded. Such strategies should include:
 - Supporting community-based training and information campaigns to change harmful norms and behaviors that perpetuate violence against women and reinforce its social acceptability. This includes working with men and communities to address violence, as well as engaging women's, faith-based, and other groups in preventing and coping with violence and its links to HIV.
 - Promoting economic opportunities for women through microfinance and skills training to give women the tools and economic independence they need to avoid or escape violence, and reduce their risk for HIV.
 - Ensure that HIV programs begin to address the realities of violence against women as a barrier to HIV services by providing training for HIV service providers to recognize the signs of violence, to offer basic counseling and social support, and appropriate referrals for additional assistance, including legal services, where available.
 - Providing training to law enforcement officials and others who may encounter victims of violence about the risk of HIV and proper referrals to prevention information, medical treatment, and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), where appropriate, to reduce the immediate risk of HIV infection.
- Strengthen the legal and policy environment so that laws prohibiting violence against women are enacted and enforced, that systems to report on the prevalence and acceptability of violence against women are established and maintained, and that these monitoring mechanisms effectively feed into the design of national AIDS programs.
- Ensure that organizations, particularly those with experience addressing violence against women, are represented on national AIDS councils and other relevant fora to help ensure that the link between violence against women and HIV is effectively addressed within the design and implementation of national AIDS programs.



Photo Credit: UNAIDS

Actions for International Partners

- Increase support for programs that address the linkages between violence against women and HIV through bilateral and multilateral funding mechanisms, including the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the World Bank's Multi-Country HIV/AIDS Program (MAP).
- Maximize coordination between AIDS and violence prevention and mitigation services, particularly in countries highly affected by these intertwined epidemics, and remove barriers to integrating these essential services on the ground.
- Provide funding and technical support to civil society groups seeking to stop violence against women and to reduce its impact on access to essential AIDS services. Target specific funding to help women's organizations and others with experience in working on violence to participate actively in public fora and national consultations about AIDS.
- Provide funding for research and evaluation of program strategies to reduce violence against women and its links to HIV, including through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. Support national surveys tracking the acceptability of violence against women to inform the design of AIDS programs.

- ¹ "WHO Multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. Summary report of the initial findings on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses." World Health Organization, Geneva, 2005.
- ² Medical Research Council of South Africa, "Violence Against Women: an Emerging Health Problem," www.mrc.ac.za/mrcnews/june2001/violence.htm.
- ³ The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS is a worldwide alliance of civil society groups, networks of women living with HIV and AIDS, governments, and UN organizations supporting AIDS strategies that work for women and girls. This brief is the second in a series that will explore a range of key issues that particularly affect women and girls in the global fight against AIDS. The first briefing, *Educate Girls, Fight AIDS*, can be found at: <http://womenandaids.unaids.org>.
- ⁴ Sarah Bott, Andrew Morrison, Mary Ellsberg, "Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle and low-income countries: a global review and analysis," World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3618, June 2005, p. 10-11.
- ⁵ "WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women. Summary report of the initial findings on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses." World Health Organization, Geneva, 2005.
- ⁶ ICRW, "Domestic Violence in India II: Exploring Strategies, Promoting Dialogue," January 2001, <http://www.icrw.org/docs/indiainfobulletin.pdf>.
- ⁷ Demographic and Health Surveys, "Profile: Gender in the Kenya 2003 DHS," http://www.measuredhs.com/gender/full_profile_2005-01-kenya2003.cfm.
- ⁸ ICRW, "Men, Masculinity and Domestic Violence in India: Summary Report of Four Studies," June 2002, p. 1-2.
- ⁹ amfAR, "Gender-Based Violence and HIV Among Women: Assessing the Evidence," Issue Brief No. 3, June 2005.
- ¹⁰ The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, WHO, "Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS: Critical Intersections, Intimate Partner Violence and HIV/AIDS," 2004, p. 1.
- ¹¹ Horizons, "HIV and Partner Violence: Implications for HIV Voluntary Counseling and Testing Programs in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania," The Population Council: February 2001, p. 1, 30.
- ¹² Human Rights Watch, "Struggling to Survive: Barriers to Justice for Rape Victims in Rwanda," http://hrw.org/reports/2004/rwanda0904/5.htm#_Toc82319926.
- ¹³ WHO, "Gender Dimensions of HIV Status Disclosure to Sexual Partners: Rates, Barriers, Outcomes," Geneva, 2003, p. 13.
- ¹⁴ Human Rights Watch, "Just Die Quietly: Domestic Violence and Women's Vulnerability to HIV in Uganda," August 2003, p. 2.
- ¹⁵ N. Duvvury and J. Knoess, "Gender Based Violence in Cambodia: Links, Opportunities and Potential Responses," WHO, Global Campaign for Violence Prevention, International Center for Research on Women, German Development Agency (GTZ), August 2005, p. 27.
- ¹⁶ J. Fleischman, "Strengthening HIV/AIDS Programs for Women: Lessons for U.S. Policy from Zambia and Kenya," (Washington D.C.: the Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 2005), p. 11.
- ¹⁷ See Stepping Stones at <http://www.steppingstonesfeedback.org/index.htm#indexcontents>.
- ¹⁸ Pronyk PM, Kim JC, Harvareaves JR, Makhubele MB, Morrison, LA, Watts C, Porter JDH, "Microfinance and HIV prevention – perspectives and emerging lessons from a community randomized trial in rural South Africa," forthcoming.
- ¹⁹ Interview with IMAGE staff, Acornhoek, South Africa, April 22, 2004.
- ²⁰ S Bott, p. 30.
- ²¹ The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, established by the UN General Assembly within UNIFEM in 1996, has supported innovative programs to address violence against women in nearly 100 countries. In 2005, it began a small grants program to address the intersection of violence against women and HIV. Information on this project was provided by UNIFEM.
- ²² Where the risk of HIV infection is high, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), a 28-day course of anti-retroviral therapy to begin within 72 hours of rape or other exposure, has been used to reduce risk of HIV infection. Unfortunately, information about and access to PEP is still not widespread in countries most highly affected by AIDS, and it must be better integrated within a broader, more comprehensive response to rape.
- ²³ J. Fleischman, p. 13.
- ²⁴ N. Duvvury, p. 22.
- ²⁵ A range of international and regional agreements also provide for women's right to protection against violence and right to health, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.



A UNAIDS Initiative

The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS

UNHCR • UNICEF • WFP • UNDP • UNFPA
UNODC • ILO • UNESCO • WHO • WORLD BANK

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Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2006

Dr. Andrew C. von Eschenbach
Acting Commissioner
Food and Drug Administration
Parklawn Building
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Eschenbach:

As Members of the Congressional Caucus For Women's Issues, we are concerned about the incidence of birth defects and other adverse outcomes of pregnancy resulting from the use of certain drugs by women while pregnant. We are writing to ask for your views on steps the FDA could take to foster the creation of a comprehensive system for monitoring pregnancy outcomes in women taking medications. We believe our nation is failing to identify preventable causes of birth defects and other pregnancy complications.

This concern arises because there is a lack of important dosage information and there is no comprehensive, coordinated national surveillance system to monitor pregnancy outcomes in women taking currently available or newly marketed medications. Currently, safety information is seriously lacking for pregnant women. With the development of a national surveillance system, better data would be available to provide reassuring safety information for drugs that are safe to take during pregnancy.

We understand there are many medications to monitor, but an initial group of medications to monitor could be asthma medications used by pregnant women. Antibiotics, analgesics, and asthma medications are the most commonly used prescription medications during pregnancy. Asthma affects almost 320,000 pregnant women per year. Uncontrolled asthma may increase pregnancy complications, but in some cases, asthma treatment during pregnancy has been associated with birth defects and premature births.

The Caucus is interested to learn what steps the FDA might take to encourage industry support for a program to systematically monitor the pregnancy outcomes for women taking asthma and allergy medications during pregnancy. We understand that comprehensive programs are in development by the private sector and are interested in what the FDA can do to support such initiatives. Additionally, we would like to know about the feasibility of an FDA led national surveillance system to gather data on the pregnancy outcomes associated with drugs, such as asthma or allergy medications, taken during pregnancy and any improved dosage recommendations that could be developed from that data. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Ginny Brown-Waite
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus
for Women's Issues



Hilda Solis
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus
for Women's Issues

Melissa A. Hart

Melissa Hart
Member of Congress

Lois Capps

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Shelley Moore Capito

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Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn Maloney
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Stephanie Tubbs Jones

Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Corrine Brown

Corrine Brown
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Lewis and Ranking Member Obey:

We are writing as concerned, bi-partisan Members of Congress, urging you to reject the proposed budget provision that would rescind funding for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) — the Crime Victims Fund. VOCA was enacted by the initiative of President Ronald Reagan to pay for victims' services and compensations. For more than 22 years, the Fund has operated on money collected from criminal offenders, not taxpayers, that is then placed in the Crime Victims Fund.

In 2000, because of a great increase in deposits into the Fund, Congress began limiting how much of the Fund could be obligated each year in order to stabilize VOCA in years when deposits fall below the annual cap. A "rainy day" reserve is created in those years when amounts deposited exceed the annual cap.

The Administration wants us to empty out that reserve. They asked us to do that last year and Congress overwhelmingly said, "NO!" They are asking us again this year, and Congress must again emphatically say, "NO!"

Both the underlying authorizing statute and Congressional appropriators have consistently pledged that all amounts in the Crime Victims Fund be kept there for victims.

The VOCA Fund is a crucial resource many communities and organizations rely on for victims' services and compensation. It supports rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, victims' compensation for court costs, funeral services, and medical expenses. VOCA is the *only* Federal program that supports services to victims of *all* types of crimes: homicide, drunk driving, elder financial exploitation, identity theft, robbery, and rape.

More than 4,400 agencies depend on VOCA funds to provide direct services to 3.6 million crime victims a year. Protecting the Crime Victims Fund is perhaps the most significant thing we can do to fulfill our commitment to help crime victims. We urge you to again reject the attempt to rescind the Fund balance and ensure that the entire Fund is available exclusively for victim services.

Sincerely,



TED POE
Co-Chair
Congressional Victim's
Rights Caucus



Jim Costa
Co-Chair
Congressional Victim's
Rights Caucus



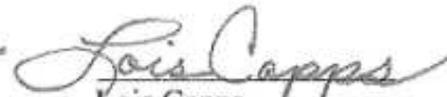
Katherine Harris
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Rights Caucus



Ginny Brown-Waite
Co-Chair
Congressional Caucus
on Women's Issues



Hilda Solis
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Michael Mattardo

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Agnes Soloman

Ron Kind

Tom Webb

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Jenny Baldoni

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Gail Rice

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Adel E. Kildoe

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Earl Blumauer

Salomon S. Orsky

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Charles F. Bess

Frank D. Lucas

Arthur Jackson

J. Martin

John Sull

John F. Timony

Carlton Molarty

K. J. Long

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Bruce Niles

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Ed. Arnold

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Bill DeLahunt

Russell Hinjosa

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Tom Hold

Walter D. Dwyer
John C. Langford

Ed Case

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Erin Charvat

Wm. Lucy Clay

Kelley Berkeley

Steve Paul

Jim Beck

John Dan

Mike Doyle

Charles T. Zupaly

Sophomore

Tom Ryan

Ron Paul

~~Salvatore~~
Chip Pitching

John Smith

~~Tom Simmons~~

~~Paul & Tony~~

Harold

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Chairman
Subcommittee on Science, the Departments
of State, Justice, and Commerce, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations and
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Allan Mollohan
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Science, the Departments
of State, Justice, and Commerce, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

Last year, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2005 to continue successful and lifesaving programs, while also taking the next steps to end sexual and domestic violence. The federal fight to end violence against women is over ten years old and great progress has been made, but there is still much work to do. The National Violence Against Women Survey found that nearly 25 percent of U.S. women report that they have been physically assaulted by an intimate partner during their lifetimes and 1 in 6 has been the victim of attempted or completed rape. The cost of intimate partner violence exceeds \$5.8 billion each year, \$4.1 billion of which is for direct medical and mental health care services. In fiscal year 2007, we must demonstrate our continued commitment to ending domestic and sexual violence by dedicating the necessary resources to fulfill the promise of VAWA 2005. Accordingly, we urge you to fully fund the VAWA programs in the Department of Justice at \$680 million and in the Department of Health and Human Services at \$320 million.

Funding for the cornerstone criminal justice programs created by VAWA is critical to supporting the safety of victims. Established grant programs have provided support and increased training for police, prosecutors, and court officials, and greatly improved the criminal justice system's response to victims; two examples are the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) program – VAWA's largest grant program, distributed to every state and territory – and the Grants to Encourage Arrest and Enforce Protection Orders program. Tremendous progress has been made, but additional investments are needed to ensure that victims can access the legal system safely. We urge you to fund the Legal Assistance for Victims, Court Training and Improvements, and Privacy Protections for Victims programs to meet this need and maximize VAWA's effectiveness in the criminal justice system. In addition, we support the new program created in VAWA 2005

through set-asides from Department of Justice administered programs, to fund culturally and linguistically specific community-based organizations addressing violence against women in their communities.

VAWA 2005 also recognizes the unique needs of sexual assault survivors by creating the Sexual Assault Services Program, the first federal funding stream to support the crisis intervention and advocacy work of local rape crisis centers. In an effort to ensure that victims in *all* communities receive the services they need, SASP also includes a 10% set-aside for culturally specific organizations addressing sexual assault within their own communities. Overall, this program is needed now more than ever in light of the FBI's 2004 Uniform Crime Report, which revealed that the only violent crime to show any increase from 2003 to 2004 was forcible rape. Full funding of this program at its authorized level is critical to addressing the needs of sexual assault survivors.

As systems become more responsive to wide-ranging communities, more and more women seek protection for themselves and their children by reaching out to the law enforcement community and the courts. This creates increased demand on the under funded lifesaving victim services, emergency shelter, and housing resources. Since its launch in 1996 the National Domestic Violence Hotline has answered almost 1.5 million calls. Yet ever-increasing demand coupled with dwindling resources and outdated equipment left an estimated 30,000 calls unanswered last year. In 2004, over a quarter of a million women and children were turned away from domestic violence shelters due to a lack of resources. We must respond decisively to this critical shortage by fully funding the Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) battered women's shelters program and the National Hotline.

We also must support battered women's progress towards independence and safety by funding programs that address the housing needs of victims. In a survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, 44% of the mayors surveyed cited domestic violence as a primary cause of homelessness. The newly authorized Transitional Housing program seeks to provide a bridge between shelter and permanent housing for victims. Long-Term Stability for Victims is a new, innovative program that will leverage new partnerships to create housing solutions that enable victims to become self-sufficient. The Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Grants are also critical to addressing the needs of victims in areas where resources are most scarce. New changes to this program expand eligibility for rural areas in 31 non-rural states, calling for additional funding to meet the need in these areas, including profoundly rural areas in California, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin. In addition, we urge you to support Training and Services to End Violence Against Women in Later Life and Disabled Women, the only programs that offer this type of training and protection for some of society's most vulnerable members.

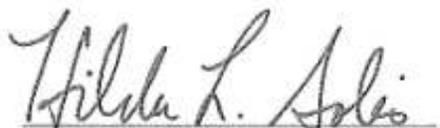
VAWA is working to break the cycle of violence, but to see further savings, both in lives and in dollars, we call for full funding for VAWA programs that address the needs of children who witness violence and younger victims of violence. Studies suggest that as many as 10 million children witness domestic violence every year, and the Department of Justice finds that over half of all reported rapes are to minors under the age of 18. The Department of Justice consistently finds that girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of non-fatal intimate partner violence. This year also provides an opportunity to invest in programs to protect children by increasing collaboration between domestic violence and child welfare systems. Intervening earlier in the cycle of violence is critical to ending domestic and sexual violence and we must invest in these new directions, while sustaining successful existing programs like Campus Grants and Safe Havens/Supervised Visitation Centers.

We also must devote resources to abuse prevention. In VAWA 2005, Congress created new programs to improve the healthcare system's response to victims of domestic and sexual violence by training health professionals and identifying and assessing what are the more effective interventions in healthcare settings. Funding is also needed for innovative prevention efforts that engage men and youth in preventing domestic and

sexual violence. Finally, we must fully fund at their authorized levels two existing successful prevention programs: the Rape Prevention and Education Grant Program and the Community Initiatives to Prevent Abuse. In 2002, Rape Prevention and Education program grantees provided more than 3 million school and community educational seminars aimed at stopping rape in their communities. All of these programs are critical to preventing violence before it starts.

This year we have an exciting opportunity to demonstrate a new commitment to the needs of victims of sexual assault and continue our strong commitment to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, as well as make additional gains through new targeted, efficient programs. We urge that you support full funding for programs that address these crimes and provide needed social service responses. Full funding for VAWA is a crucial investment in our communities—it will save lives, prevent future crimes, and result in reduced costs.

Sincerely,



HILDA L. SOLIS

Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues



GINNY BROWN-WAITE

Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues



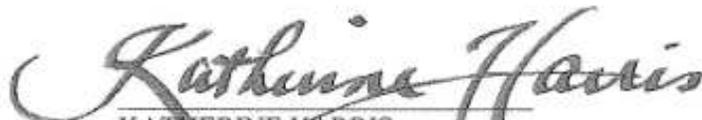
TED POE

Co-Chair, Victim's Rights Caucus



JIM COSTA

Co-Chair, Victim's Rights Caucus



KATHERINE HARRIS

Co-Chair, Victim's Rights Caucus



ZOE LOFGREN

Member of Congress



MEL WATT

Chair, Congressional Black Caucus



GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus



MIKE HONDA

Chair, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2006

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales
U. S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

Secretary Mike Leavitt
U. S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Attorney General Gonzales and Secretary Leavitt:

We are writing to encourage you to fully fund programs addressing domestic and sexual violence in the FY 2008 Budget. Last year, Congress reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 (VAWA), which continues successful and lifesaving programs, while also taking the next steps to end sexual and domestic violence. We applaud the Administration's continued support of critical VAWA programs that help our nation better respond to the needs of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. We encourage you to continue this support by fully funding the VAWA programs (including the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act) in the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services in the FY 2008 Budget.

As you know, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking are crimes of epidemic proportions, exacting terrible costs on individual lives and our communities. Nearly 25 percent of U.S. women report that they have been physically assaulted by an intimate partner during their lifetimes, 1 in 6 have been the victims of attempted or completed rape, and the cost of intimate partner violence exceeds \$5.8 billion each year.

Recent studies indicate that domestic violence has begun to decline since VAWA was first authorized, yet more work remains to be done. Studies also demonstrate that VAWA is more than good social policy, it is good fiscal policy – VAWA 1994 saved nearly \$14.8 billion dollars in net averted social costs in its first 6 years. VAWA 2005 has been crafted to continue the success of VAWA of 1994 and 2000, by bringing together existing resources to create new collaborations that efficiently deliver services to victims. VAWA is working to break the cycle of violence, but to see further savings, both in lives and in dollars, VAWA programs in the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services must be fully funded in the FY 2008 Budget.

As successful programs reach more victims of domestic and sexual violence and prevent further costly and devastating crimes against them, the demand for services has consistently risen. Increased training for police, prosecutors, and court officials has greatly improved the criminal justice system's response to victims. These programs have been so successful that many more victims are now referred for services and demand has steadily risen for emergency shelter, hotlines, legal assistance and support services. Since VAWA 1994 there has been a 51% increase in reporting of domestic violence.

Continued efforts are needed to address victims' needs and to stem the tide of violence:

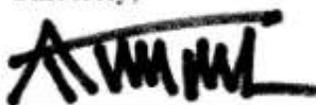
- 70% of victims lack legal representation. Funding for civil legal assistance and support for victim assistance in criminal justice systems funded by VAWA ensures that victims have access to and are not re-victimized by either the civil or criminal justice systems.
- STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) grants are the single largest source of funds for states to respond to domestic and sexual violence. According to a national evaluation, 44% of STOP grant recipients added new victim services; 64% enhanced or improved existing services; and 79% reported offering services to victims who would not have received services without STOP funding. This program needs increased funding to meet the continued need and to replace funding that has been directed to earmarks.
- According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report, forcible rape is the only violence crime to show any increase from 2003 to 2004. VAWA 2005 makes changes to better address the needs of sexual assault survivors.
- American Indian and Alaska Native women are battered, raped and stalked at far greater rates than any other group of women in the United States. VAWA 2005 recognizes the exceptional needs of Tribal communities.
- The complexities of addressing violence against women within Communities of Color are vast and intersect with many other issues. In response, VAWA 2005 addresses the culturally specific needs of Communities of Color.
- Women with disabilities and women in later life are more likely to be the victims of abuse and violence than other women because of their increased physical, economic, social or psychological dependence on others. VAWA 2005 continues successful efforts to address violence against these vulnerable populations.
- More than 50% of homeless women and children are homeless because they are fleeing domestic violence, and 38% of all victims of domestic violence will become homeless at some point during their lives. VAWA 2005 seeks to increase safe housing options, so that fewer families face homelessness after they leave emergency shelters.
- Over 8.8 million children witness domestic violence in the home each year; girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence; and, over half of all sexual assaults reported to law enforcement are minors. VAWA 2005 addresses the needs of children who witness violence and works to support youth who are already experiencing violence in their own relationships. In addition, it recognizes that we must engage men and youth in preventing domestic and sexual violence and raise awareness through increased public education efforts.

- Between one quarter and one half of domestic violence victims report that they have lost a job due, at least in part, to domestic violence; and almost 50% of sexual assault survivors lose their jobs in the aftermath of the crime. VAWA 2005 supports businesses and employers who are responding to the needs of victims in the workplace.
- In 2004, over a quarter of a million women and children were turned away from domestic violence shelters due to lack of available resources. Funding for the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act program is critical to meeting the need for lifesaving services including emergency battered women's shelters, crisis lines, counseling, victim assistance, and programs for underserved communities.
- Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) funds cost-saving efforts to stop sexual violence before it starts. In 2002, grantees provided more than 3 million school and community educational seminars. Increased funding for RPE is needed to provide crucial support to programs working to end sexual violence in their rural, suburban and urban communities.
- VAWA 2005 creates new partnerships with health providers, who are uniquely positioned to reach victims of domestic and sexual violence, and increase their health and well-being.

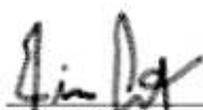
To continue the progress toward ending domestic and sexual violence, our nation must invest in these new directions, while sustaining successful programs. VAWA 2005 continues the lifesaving core services created by VAWA 1994 and 2000, and extends these efforts with targeted, innovative new programs.

In FY 2008 the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services have an exciting opportunity to continue the Administration's strong commitment to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking and make additional gains through the new targeted, efficient VAWA programs. We urge that you support full funding in the FY 2008 Budget for programs that address these crimes, provide needed services for victims, and prevent future violence. Full funding for VAWA is a crucial investment in our communities that will save lives, prevent future crimes, and result in reduced costs.

Sincerely,



TED POE
Co-Chair
Victim's Rights Caucus



JIM COSTA
Co-Chair
Victim's Rights Caucus



KATHERINE HARRIS
Co-Chair
Victim's Rights Caucus

Ginny Brown-Waite

GINNY BROWN-WAITE
Co-Chair
Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues

Hilda L. Solis

HILDA L. SOLIS
Co-Chair
Congressional Caucus for
Women's Issues

cc: Rob Portman, Director, Office on Management and Budget

John Boehner

Stephanie Tubbs Jones

Rush Holt

Tony Balderrri

Melissa A. Hart

Tom Clapper

Tom Allen

J. Mark

Susan Davis

Mike Castle

Judy Biggert

Betsy McCollum

Ellen O'Toole

Jim McDermott

John W. Olver

Barbara Lubia

W. Faust

Chris

Les Bradley

D. Buckert

Gus

Wendy

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Hilj Coyle
Lou Kind

John Pratt
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Ann Van Holler

Bing Bird

Raymond
Ben Chandler

Shelly Mae Capito

Rail M. Grijalva

Chas. City
Jeff T. Williams

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Michael Setpatrick

Jon Lewis
Dana D. De

Danny K. Davis
Michael E. Caputo

Julie Carson

Grace S. Napolitano

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Coran

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J. Leach

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Alan B. Mollohan

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R. W. Simmons

Al Skelton

Jim Langerin

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

John A. Brady

Manly

Hyd Doggett

Kil Ferguson

W.S. Simmons

Tom Ryan

Blair Smith

Jim Reed

Stephanie

Allyson

Allyson L. Schwartz

Jelley Bentley

Frank

Michael T. McCaul

Joe

Jim Thun

Richard

Ed Case

Liane E. Watson

Wm. Lucy Clay

Jon C. Patz

John A. B. B.

Pete Stark

Pat

Cyne:

Harold Ford

Albert R. Upton

Pro

Chad J. Mehall

Doris O. Matsui

Chris Smith

Nita M. Snow

Nancy L. Johnson

Lucille Roybal-Allard

Tom Lantos

Shen Brown

Charles F. Bass

Carolyn B. Maloney

John Dingell

J. Michael Smith

Bob Filner

Gene Amodeo

John Dingell

John Oberstar

John Dingell

Chris V. Gohmert

Robert A. Anderson

Jane Harman

Jo Ann Emerson

Ralph M. Hall

Jerry Moran

Barbara L. Vucarich

Earl Blumenauer

Cosine Brown

Walter K. Minner

Janet Hillman-Somell

Rubén Hinojosa

Louis M. Slaughter

Solomon P. Ortiz

Mary Watts

Nancy Pelosi

Michael Michael Jim Holden

Madeline J. Boudelle T. J. J.

Patrick F. Kennedy Mary Bone

Paul A. Acker Nick Dyer

Cpt. Balthasar Spencer Bachus

Melissa Bean

Jim Davis Von Odean

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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 27, 2006

The Honorable Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
House Majority Leader
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert and Majority Leader Boehner,

As women Members of Congress, we are writing to urge floor consideration of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act of 2006 (H.R. 5472) before Congress adjourns for the year.

H.R. 5472 was introduced in May 2006 by Congresswoman Sue Myrick with bipartisan support, and has garnered 118 cosponsors to date. For the past 15 years, the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program has helped low-income, uninsured, and underserved women gain access to potentially lifesaving screening for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer as well as education, outreach, case management and treatment services.

Hundreds of thousands of women across the country are affected by breast and cervical cancer each year, as well as their families and loved ones. More than 212,000 women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer this year and over 40,000 women will die from the disease. Nearly 10,000 women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer this year, and about 3,700 women will die from the disease. While strides have been made in cervical cancer research this year, particularly with the Food and Drug Administration's approval of a human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine, the virus which causes most cervical cancer cases, screening is still an incredibly important tool.

As a result of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, nearly 6 million cancer screening examinations have been provided to more than 2.5 million women. The program has diagnosed more than 17,000 breast cancers, more than 60,000 precancerous cervical lesions, and over 1,100 cervical cancers. Early detection of breast and cervical cancers has a dramatic impact on survival. When detected at its earliest stages, the five-year survival rate for breast cancer is nearly 98 percent, and the five-year survival rate for cervical cancer is more than 92 percent. Even though cancer screening tests are more widely available and help save women's lives, deaths from breast and cervical cancer occur more frequently among women who are uninsured or under-insured.

As Members of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, which was instrumental in the establishment of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program

in 1991, we believe this program is a vital component of the health care safety net in our country. Today, we continue the proud legacy of fighting to improve the health of all women in our country and ask that you schedule H.R. 5472 for floor consideration before the end of the 109th Congress.

Sincerely,



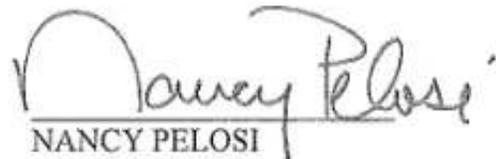
HILDA L. SOLIS
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus
for Women's Issues



GINNY BROWN-WAITE
Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus
for Women's Issues



LOIS CAPPS
Co-Vice Chair, Congressional Caucus
for Women's Issues



NANCY PELOSI
House Democratic Leader



TAMMY BALDWIN
Member of Congress



SUE MYRICK
Member of Congress



ROSA DeLAURO
Member of Congress



SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO
Member of Congress



NITA LOWEY
Member of Congress



JO ANN DAVIS
Member of Congress



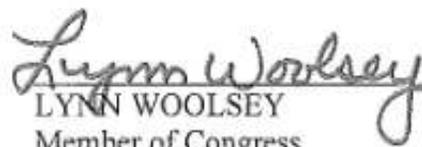
SHEILA JACKSON LEE
Member of Congress



KATHERINE HARRIS
Member of Congress



JAN SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress



LYNN WOOLSEY
Member of Congress


CAROLYN MALONEY
Member of Congress


BETTY McCOLLUM
Member of Congress


MARCY KAPTUR
Member of Congress


NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ
Member of Congress


JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD
Member of Congress


ZOE LOFGREN
Member of Congress

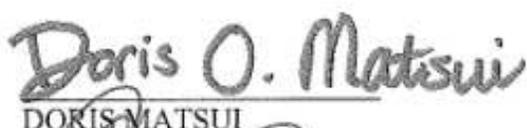

LINDA SÁNCHEZ
Member of Congress


SHELLEY BERKLEY
Member of Congress

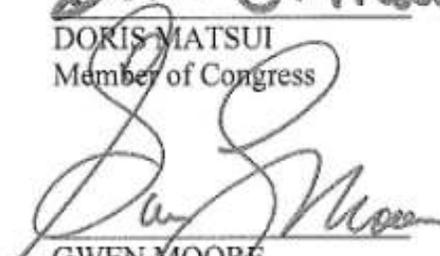

CAROLYN McARTHUR
Member of Congress

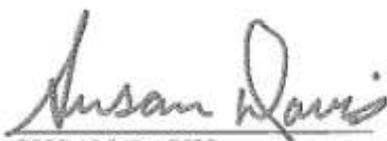

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
Member of Congress

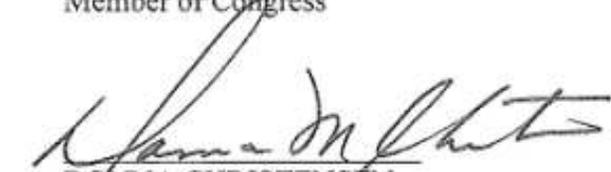

DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ
Member of Congress


DORIS MATSUI
Member of Congress


MELISSA BEAN
Member of Congress


GWEN MOORE
Member of Congress

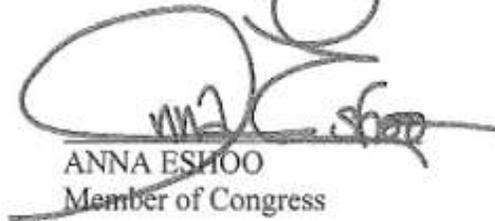

SUSAN DAVIS
Member of Congress

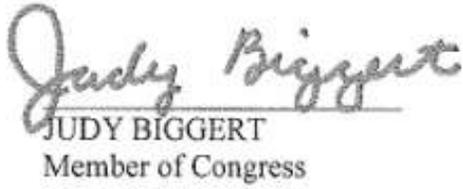

DONNA CHRISTENSEN
Member of Congress


STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES
Member of Congress


CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK
Member of Congress


GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
Member of Congress


ANNA ESHOO
Member of Congress


JUDY BIGGERT
Member of Congress
